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Friday, 30 September 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Address by Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear an address by the Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Chairman Rakhmonov *(interpretation from Russian):* Speaking from this high rostrum of the United Nations, I would like first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the high office of the presidency of the General Assembly. I am convinced that, having received such a high honour, you will be successful in your conduct of this forum that is so important in the life of the world community.

Reflecting on the past, we can state with satisfaction that the United Nations, by traversing the difficult road of overcoming political and ideological confrontation, has saved humanity from a new global catastrophe. Today we can say with confidence that the United Nations is a universally recognized instrument of peace and construction.

We commend the United Nations peace-keeping and humanitarian efforts in Tajikistan. I consider it my duty to convey the sincere thanks of the Tajik people to the United Nations, the donor countries, the international organizations - in short, to everyone who is doing everything possible to help our State in these hard times.

There is no need to describe in detail all the hardship that has befallen our long-suffering motherland. The wounds of the civil war, that serious illness of our society, cannot be healed either by surgical intervention or by compulsory treatment. They are healed only when the victim himself becomes aware of his affliction and makes the most effective use of all possible means necessary for recovery.

To the credit of the people of my country, it should be said that they were able to put an end to bloodshed, lawlessness and terror and start a constructive life. Experiencing a severe lack of time and an extremely heavy burden of political, social and economic problems, we were able to consolidate a tendency towards the stabilization of the situation in our country. Today we can state with confidence that the situation differs radically from that prevailing at the beginning of last year.

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Recognizing its responsibility for the destiny of the country, the Government of Tajikistan firmly declared its commitment to values common to all humanity and its resolve to start building a democratic and secular State based on the rule of law. In order to realize these intentions we have launched the constitutional process in our country.

In the course of drafting the Constitution we were guided by the experience of countries with established democratic traditions and advice given by highly qualified experts of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). We sought to take into consideration the high standards set up in the basic documents of the Helsinki process so that the new Constitution would ensure to the fullest extent possible the protection of inalienable human rights.

We intend to conduct a referendum so the whole population can decide on the adoption of the new Constitution, the results of which will reinforce hope for achieving further progress in the development of society and the State. The proposed draft Constitution will provide a legal basis for subsequent democratic transformations and reforms. It will undoubtedly accelerate them and make them irreversible. Furthermore, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, elected by the whole population, will enforce the Constitution and guarantee the State's unity and integrity.

In our domestic policy the principal issues for our country's political leaders have become the questions of our nation's spiritual revival, of the halting of senseless confrontation and of the creation of a social basis for mutual understanding and forgiveness. The solution of these problems will help achieve maximum progress towards national reconciliation.

Let me describe briefly to the Assembly our view of the problem. Addressing the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, I stated that political dialogue was the only possible way of untying the internal Tajik knot and achieving national reconciliation and that it was one of our highest priorities. A careful study of the state of society, and of public opinion in particular, gave us the idea of entering into dialogue with those who have never concealed their desire to seize power by force. In doing so we used all possible means, including regional and international mechanisms. Only the good will demonstrated by the leaders of Tajikistan made it possible to start and to develop the negotiating process.

The importance of the initiatives put forward by the Secretary-General, the decisions of the Security Council and the assistance of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in accelerating the national reconciliation process should be particularly emphasized.

We deeply appreciate the unwavering attention of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali to all the problems of Tajikistan, and we take this opportunity to express to him our sincere gratitude.

We appreciate no less deeply the activities of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Tajikistan, Mr. Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, of the United Nations Observers in Tajikistan and of the CSCE mission. All of them have made a valuable contribution to the elaboration of the negotiating mechanisms.

I would like to note with satisfaction the hopeful results of the political consultations between us and the Tajik opposition, with the mediation of Mr. Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, which took place in Tehran in the second half of September 1994. The parties signed the Agreement on a cease-fire and stopping hostile actions, and we consider this to be an important step towards the achievement of national reconciliation, peace and stability in Tajikistan. The Security Council and the international community noted with satisfaction the signing of that document. From this rostrum I would like to express the hope that the question of dispatching United Nations military observers to Tajikistan will be resolved without delay.

I express our gratitude to the Governments and the peoples of the Russian Federation, the United States of America, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and other concerned parties and countries for their assistance in the promotion of the inter-Tajik dialogue.

However, I must state with regret that there have been recurrent outbreaks of violence, initiated by the unmotivated escalation of the armed opposition and manifested in acts of terror, taking of hostages and other subversive actions. We consider these actions a deviation from political methods of resolving contentious questions and reconciling existing contradictions. We also see them as showing disregard of the international community's appeal to the Tajik parties to show restraint and countenance no action that might impede the process of negotiations.

Despite those actions, the political leaders of Tajikistan took a series of practical steps to strengthen confidence-building measures. At its twentieth session the Parliament of Tajikistan decided to postpone the referendum and the elections. The aim of this initiative of the members of Parliament was to involve the widest possible spectrum of political forces in the constitutional process, to give everyone wishing to return home an opportunity to do so and to let all our compatriots who had the bad fortune to be outside the country take part in the elections. We are using this extra time to make proper preparations for addressing organizational questions concerning the invitation of observers from the United Nations, the CSCE, other international organizations and interested countries to the elections.

We reaffirm our principled position to solve existing contentious questions by means of dialogue. We are convinced that the opposition's reliance on force and the commensurate reaction to it may cause unpredictable consequences leading to the undermining of the stabilization process and of the positive decisions reached during negotiations.

At the same time I consider it necessary to draw the Assembly's attention to another very important aspect of this problem. It seems that the irreconcilable wing of the opposition is cultivating plans of expanding the geographical scope of the inter-Tajik conflict by instituting the use of mercenaries in the armed confrontation. This creates conditions for the internationalization of the conflict, which may in turn threaten to spread the confrontation throughout Central Asia. It is easy to imagine what serious consequences this may have.

Speaking from this rostrum, I must draw the Assembly's attention to our anxiety over the current situation in the neighbouring Islamic State of Afghanistan. The world cannot remain indifferent to the situation in that country, where internecine war came to dominate social relations. The Afghan conflict has brought forth a dangerous phenomenon: the emergence of anarchic geographical units that can become a base for international terrorism and unpunished trafficking in weapons and drugs.

The situation on the Tajik-Afghan border keeps a vast region in tension. Central Asia's fragile backbone of political balance may not withstand the high pressure, and the destructive processes taking place in Afghanistan right now may lead to a regional cataclysm. We urge that the Afghan problem be given the world Community's most serious consideration. Furthermore, we are convinced that the alleviation of tension in Afghanistan will significantly and positively influence the solution of the inter-Tajik conflict. We have no doubt that the people of Afghanistan will ultimately achieve reconciliation and restore peace to their country. We sincerely wish the people of Afghanistan success in achieving these goals as soon as possible.

In current circumstances, with many hotbeds of tension caused by the cold war still existing, the peace-keeping efforts of the world community have a particularly important role. It is evident that there are certain rules limiting the use of United Nations peace-keeping forces, which reduces the effectiveness of measures taken by the Organization in this regard.

I would once again like to draw the attention of the Security Council and the Assembly squarely to the question of giving to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) joint peace-keeping forces in Tajikistan the status of a United Nations operation. The CIS countries are helping Tajikistan with the protection of its southern borders, which are at the same time the borders of the Commonwealth. In this regard we recognize the special and leading role of Russia, which has been and remains the guarantor of stability and security for all Central Asian States. We do not believe the presence of the CIS peace-keeping forces in our country contradicts the decisions of the Security Council or the initiatives of the Secretary-General aimed at achieving peace in Tajikistan. Moreover, from our point of view, these forces are the decisive factor in deterrence and in overcoming a state of crisis on the Tajik-Afghan border. Taking a wider view of this problem, one might even see the outlines of a new concept of security for the whole of Central Asia. We still hope the Security Council will find it opportune to reconsider our initiative to call a special meeting of the Council to consider the situation in and around Tajikistan, as well as the question of giving the CIS joint peace-keeping forces the status of a United Nations peace-keeping force.

The tragedies of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Somalia and the hot spots in the CIS all give evidence of the fact that the danger of nuclear catastrophe has been replaced by civil conflicts caused by international, religious or ethnic differences and that their recurrence is becoming the primary problem for the world community.

I should like to say a few words on the question of the proposed reform of the Organization. On the whole

we support the idea of expanding the Security Council. Such a step, on the one hand, would reflect the global changes taking place in today's world and, on the other hand, would give an opportunity to achieve a more balanced representation in the Council.

The emerging consensus on the need to enlarge the number of seats in the Security Council will probably improve the efficiency of this central body of the United Nations. In other words, the Council will enhance its potential, acquire more dynamism, increase the variety of decisions it takes and generate a wider spectrum of ideas.

The world is diverse and is thus unique. Its diversity, however, does not preclude the process of integration. A praiseworthy example is Europe. A better future for mankind is apparently based on these kinds of processes.

Tajikistan as a member of the world community sees the future of its development in the integration processes on various levels, in cooperation with neighbouring and distant countries, regions and international organizations.

The activities of the CSCE have proved to us the efficiency of such cooperation. Its informal approach to the accelerated integration of Tajikistan into the international community and the realization of the mandate of the CSCE Mission to Tajikistan will undoubtedly be among the major factors in the achievement of national reconciliation in our country. To a considerable extent we rely upon CSCE assistance to enhance democratic institutions and create a society founded on the rule of law and on the basis of high standards that will provide universal human rights and freedoms for every citizen. While carrying out active preparation for the upcoming Budapest summit meeting, we hope to put forward at that important forum our view of the problems and to define the areas of cooperation.

Undoubtedly for us the question of participation in the Commonwealth of Independent States is vital.

Our present position is that independence and sovereignty is not a sword but is rather the shield of a nation that must be strong but not heavy. Independence should not burden human lives but on the contrary should make everybody's life easier and give all people on Earth the opportunity to be equal. Principles of independence and sovereignty in the current period of history must be flexible and diverse, for the main goal is to ensure that people who used to have deeply rooted historical ties now have an opportunity for a wider realization of their economic and spiritual potential in the interests of future generations.

It is precisely in this light that we consider the development of the Commonwealth of Independent States that is trying to find a mutually acceptable form of integration without harming national interests. Despite well-known difficulties the Commonwealth of Independent States pragmatically searches for ways to rationalize all mechanisms of interaction among its members.

I am convinced that the leadership and the people of States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States have by now recognized the truth that it is unrealistic to expect that, alone, a country can expect to solve the task of renewing society and of carrying out reforms. We are facing the historical reality of building our future by cooperative and coordinated efforts.

In the post-Soviet period, Russia - a permanent member of the Security Council - has assumed a heavy burden and responsibility for peace-keeping on a greater part of the territory of the former Soviet Union. We note with deep satisfaction that these supreme efforts of Russia have started to bring results. The multinational nation of Tajikistan highly appreciates and welcomes the peace-keeping activities of Russia.

I should like to note in this context that the ideas of concluding a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, of adopting the decision on the Non-Proliferation Treaty's open-ended and unconditional extension, of developing regional programmes to strengthen peace and security, and other proposals put forward by Mr. Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, in his address to the forty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly and aimed at strengthening international security, all deserve the broadest support.

Tajikistan notes with gratitude the initiatives by Uzbekistan to bring about a peaceful solution to the intra-Tajik conflict and to ensure security and stability in the region of Central Asia.

We highly appreciate our good-neighbourly relations with the States of Central Asia. We hope that the sphere of their integration efforts will expand in the interests of all countries of the region of Central Asia. They deserve careful study and support.

Nowadays it is universally recognized that alongside political questions, problems of social and economic development have assumed the same importance and urgency. The correctness of this statement is confirmed by the conclusions reached at the end of the high-level Economic and Social Council segment, that we support and approve. It is our firm conviction that the main aim of restructuring the United Nations should be to preserve and increase its potential to solve the whole range of development issues.

For the Republic of Tajikistan which has found itself in the hard grip of a transitional period aggravated by the consequences of tragic events in recent years, the problem of economic survival has become a critical test. According to the "development indicators" data published by the World Bank, Tajikistan has been included in the group of countries with the lowest level of per capita income.

Today Tajikistan badly needs the help of the international community, not only to restore its economy but also to create the conditions for long-term development. Our country, which is a land-locked State, is counting on special attention from the international community in matters of economic and social development, and hopes that its appeal to include Tajikistan in the group of least developed countries will be properly understood and supported by the United Nations community.

I assure Members that the highest objective for the leaders of the Republic of Tajikistan is the achievement of values common to all humanity, calmness and peace in our Republic, the creation of a unified, peaceful, developed State of Tajikistan. And I hope that all countries of the world will help us to achieve this noble objective.

Eighty years ago the fire of the First World War broke out, and very soon - in a few months - humanity will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. These dates will forever be inscribed in the history of the twentieth century, in the history of the world. Still, the dates themselves are not as important as the lessons which these events have taught us.

The bitter experience of the Second World War persuaded the leading Powers of the necessity to create an international organization the aim of which would be the maintenance and enhancement of peace all over the world. The main achievement of the United Nations during the almost 50 years of its existence has been saving humankind from the fire of a new world war, and its development has taken place on the basis of enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation, taking into account the interests of all parties, and the equality of large and small nations in the name of preserving our planet for future generations.

Now, at the end of the twentieth century, it gives us great hope that the world community will not only prevent the outbreak of a third world war but will do its best to make sure that the twenty-first century will become a period of creativity and calm on the whole planet.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan for the statement he has just made.

His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, Head of State and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 (*continued*)

General debate

Address by His Serene Highness Prince Albert, Crown Prince of Monaco

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco.

His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert of Monaco and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Crown Prince Albert *(interpretation from French)*: At the outset, I should like to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, and to the newly elected members of the Bureau. Your outstanding personal and professional qualities are, I am sure, a guarantee of the success of our work.

I also take this occasion to pay a tribute to your predecessor on the podium, Mr. Samuel Insanally, who, often in difficult circumstances, fulfilled his mandate

expertly and efficiently. For instance, the opportunity he gave us freely to express our opinions and ideas on several important problems of our time, such as that of development, was a significant initiative that will certainly have a positive impact on all our further thinking and work on these questions.

I turn now to our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to thank him warmly for his efforts in undertaking the very complex and sensitive missions entrusted to him by the General Assembly and the Security Council over the past months. Given that, in many respects, the state of the world continues to deteriorate, these efforts have been all the more worthy. While some conflicts were born or rekindled, others - often long-standing, but no less virulent - have become worse or have expanded. Brutality and violence, sometimes interethnic, have all too often exploded, and no real means have existed or been available to redress their effects or the harm they have caused.

While we have been heartened by certain encouraging developments in South Africa - which we welcome back to democratic life - or in the Middle East, many potential conflicts remain and others have already erupted or are about to do so. Entire peoples are still under the yoke of dictatorship. The suffering and barbarity entailed are all the more vicious and painful because the methods of repression have kept pace with scientific and technical advances. The crimes of the highest civilization go hand in hand with the crimes of the highest barbarity. More than ever before, women, children, the elderly and the weakest and most vulnerable are threatened and victimized. When peace collapses - and the more fragile it is the more violent is its collapse - war quickly becomes total, and civilian populations, especially the poorest, are rarely spared.

The international community, pained and overwhelmed, can only resort, in desperation, to humanitarian assistance. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda are the most striking examples of this. Most often, this humanitarian assistance comes in response to tragic situations and complex political circumstances that make it difficult to deliver and, despite all the haste and the efforts made, render its benefits uncertain.

Bearing in mind the decisions taken by the Security Council in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina with a view to protecting the civilian populations, and inspired by the courageous and generous initiative recently undertaken by France in Rwanda with the support of Africa and the United Nations, should not the international community adopt a convention-based instrument that would meet this challenge? For such challenges could face it again in the future.

Through such an instrument, States parties would undertake in advance to authorize in case of a conflict the establishment of protection and security areas reserved for defenceless children, women and the elderly. The boundaries of these zones would, of course, need to be clearly established, with the agreement of the State or States concerned. Special access routes to such areas - neutralized airports, roads and railroads - would be provided for in this treaty in order to ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The protection and functioning of these areas would have to be guaranteed by unarmed agents, preferably volunteers, under the auspices and responsibility of the United Nations, and they would wear white helmets or have some other distinctive insignia, as has already been suggested.

The Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949 - which envisaged *cordons sanitaires* and security zones, without however making them mandatory - could serve as a model to a great extent when we consider this matter. Does not protection for the most vulnerable sectors of the non-combatant population - children, women and the elderly - deserve true international commitment? It would be particularly significant and symbolic if, on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, after considering a desirability study drafted by the Secretary-General, our Organization equipped itself with such an instrument, open for signature by all States, providing for the establishment of humanitarian zones in time of conflict.

In this way, the High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and international charitable institutions such as the International Committee of the Red Cross or certain non-governmental organizations recognized for their humanitarian activities would be in a better position rapidly to provide protection, relief and assistance to the civilian populations afflicted by destructive conflicts and deprived of their most fundamental rights.

While it is more important than ever for our Organization to secure for itself effective means of protecting innocent civilian populations, we must none the less not neglect future generations. By depleting the natural resources of our Earth and damaging our

environment, often out of simple negligence, we are jeopardizing the future and the happiness of our children. The Principality of Monaco is fully aware of this and is striving to assist to the extent within its power in protecting the environment as well as in combating pollution in the oceans and seas.

By virtue of its maritime traditions, Monaco has primarily throughout its history stressed the protection of the resources of the marine environment. A large number of initiatives have been taken in this respect on the local, regional and even international levels. The Principality is always ready to step up its efforts and to strengthen international cooperation in these areas.

Indeed, in this respect a cooperative undertaking with the United Nations has existed since 1961. Pursuant to an agreement concluded between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Government of Monaco, an international marine radioactivity laboratory has been operating in the Principality. This laboratory has garnered important and interesting experience in the realm of the measurement of levels of radioactivity in the seas and oceans. With the assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme, it has developed various methods of monitoring the marine environment on a worldwide scale.

The proclamation of 1998 as the International Year of the Ocean, as proposed by the Economic and Social Council, would, I am convinced, provide an opportunity to bolster this international cooperation and to once again take stock of the marine environment, after the assessment drawn up in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 at the Earth Summit.

In this spirit, we have paid particular attention to certain conclusions of the Fourth United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks whose migrations take place both within and outside exclusive economic zones, which took place here in August. The alarm that was sounded as a result in particular of the report drawn up by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations with respect to the overexploitation of the seas and oceans cannot leave us indifferent. The careful husbandry and use of such precious marine resources and the stepped up struggle to combat marine pollution should continue to be the subject of the most energetic and attentive concern on the part of this Organization.

The agreement recently adopted in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea - and we very much welcome the felicitous conclusion of that agreement - demonstrates that with goodwill, the international community can find the right formulae to accommodate the interests of all by preserving the general interest, that is, thinking globally but also acting locally.

Only world cooperation can make it possible to solve the grave problems associated with safeguarding our environment and as a result respond to the tremendous challenges that we face now and will increasingly face in the future. With future generations in mind, I feel impelled to speak of the future of our Organization, which next year will celebrate a landmark event: its fiftieth anniversary.

Important world conferences - the one on population and development which has just concluded in Cairo, the one on social development scheduled for Copenhagen in March next year, or the Fourth World Conference on Women, which will take place in September 1995 in Beijing - have been and will be opportunities to intensify our thinking and build up our means of intervention in key areas for the future.

The work in progress to improve the functioning of the Organization and its structures is encouraging. The Government of the Principality is following these developments with interest.

I should be remiss if I concluded my statement without thanking the members of the Security Council and the States that have contributed to peace-keeping operations and without stating that the Principality fully appreciates the sacrifices made. Men and women serving the Organization have lost their lives. We salute them and pay tribute to their memory. We must be watchful - and this is a major responsibility - in order to ensure better protection for these soldiers of peace while remembering their wives, their children and their families.

Our action is and should always be designed first and foremost to serve mankind, to alleviate its sufferings and remedy the evils of its plight. Is it not time at last to say, as André Breton wrote, "for man to go over to the side of man, lock, stock and barrel".

I wish, as I conclude my statement, to express my fervent and sincere wishes for the success of the work of this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

I venture to hope that thanks to general goodwill and mutual understanding we may be able to find practical and effective solutions, in keeping with the spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations, to the key issues before us for our consideration.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Crown Prince of the Principality of Monaco for the statement he has just made.

His Serene Highness Prince Albert, Crown Prince of Monaco, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Culture, Youth and Sport of Liechtenstein, Her Excellency Ms. Andrea Willi.

Ms. Willi (Liechtenstein): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I wish you every success and pledge you the full support of my delegation. I also wish to commend your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, for the excellent and able manner in which he conducted the work of the forty-eighth session.

Under his wise guidance, the Member States of the United Nations, during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, engaged in a creative and constructive dialogue on a question likely to have a great impact on the future work and credibility of the United Nations, that of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. The report of the Working Group, which was adopted on 14 September by the General Assembly, makes it clear that these discussions have had a positive beginning and that much more work in a constructive and open-minded spirit remains to be done in order to find a solution acceptable to all Member States. Even though detailed discussion of this sensitive issue must be continued by the Working Group, I should like to reiterate at this juncture that the Government of Liechtenstein attaches the utmost importance to maintaining the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the Security Council, and that at the same time it holds the view that the discussions of the Working Group should cover not only the enlargement of the Council, but also, and to no less an extent, its working methods.

The second session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development, which will take place in Copenhagen in March 1995, concluded its work just three weeks ago. The Liechtenstein Government is encouraged by the results of this session, which prove that the preparatory process is on the right track, and we are confident that the consultations to be held by Ambassador Somavía during the last week of October will lay a solid basis for the work of the third session and bring Member States closer to achieving the important goal of a final document which can be adopted by consensus. The World Summit for Social Development can be a crucial event for the future of mankind, and we must not miss this opportunity to promote social progress and better standards of living in greater freedom, which is one of the most noble goals of this Organization. This gathering, as the draft final document acknowledges, is closely interlinked with other important conferences, notably the International Conference on Population and Development, which was successfully concluded on 13 September in Cairo, and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September 1995.

Among other subjects under consideration by the General Assembly, the draft final document also mentions the International Year of the Family, which we are still celebrating. I wish to underline that, in the view of the Liechtenstein Government, a concise summary and analysis of the activities undertaken within the framework of the International Year of the Family, at both the national and the regional levels, can make a substantive contribution to the successful outcome of the two United Nations world conferences in 1995, and at the same time can help achieve the goal of making the International Year of the Family not an isolated event, but, rather, one which will have a continuing and long-term impact on national policies as well as on regional and international cooperation. Liechtenstein has undertaken manifold activities in order to celebrate the International Year; amongst other things, it dedicated the commemorative activities for its National Day on 15 August to the objectives of the International Year. The Government of Liechtenstein therefore wholeheartedly welcomes the decision of the General Assembly, taken in its resolution 47/237 of September 1993, to hold an international conference on the family, which will take place here in New York on 18 October, and hopes to be in a position

to contribute to giving the International Year a lasting impact.

Mr. Arzoumanian (Armenia), Vice President, took the Chair.

In our view, preventive diplomacy, as outlined in "An Agenda for Peace", could and should be used more often and more efficiently. We commend the activities of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Especially since the 1990 Summit meeting in Paris, when the leaders of 36 States signed and committed themselves to the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the CSCE has shown that it can play a most useful role in monitoring specific situations and in initiating negotiation processes. We are of the opinion that improved coordination of the activities of the Conference and those of the United Nations can achieve very fruitful results.

The international political environment has changed. Having been accorded its rightful place in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security, the United Nations now has as one of its central tasks that of playing a more active role than ever before in conflict resolution. Unfortunately it must be stated again this year that the sheer number and magnitude of the conflicts surpass the abilities of this Organization. There is no region in the world without a conflict of some sort; regional conflicts have become a major threat to international peace and security. We are aware that peace-keeping must be and will remain one of the Organization's most important instruments for maintaining peace and security in the world, but peace-keeping operations have to be provided with clear mandates and be set within a reasonable and realistic time-frame. Since Liechtenstein became a member of the United Nations in 1990 the expenses for peace-keeping operations have increased dramatically. We are aware that the changing global situation has made an increase of peace-keeping activities unavoidable, but it should also be noted that these costs increasingly constitute a heavy burden for national budgets.

In this connection, we should note that we welcome the creation of the post of an Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services and the appointment of Mr. Karl Theodor Paschke to this post. We hope that this important step will lead to improved financial management of the United Nations and at the same time to timely and full payment of assessed contributions by all Member States, both into the regular budget and for peace-keeping actions.

The Liechtenstein Government attaches the utmost importance to the promotion and protection of human rights and I wish to emphasize that the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993 can, if it is followed by full implementation of its provisions, constitute a milestone in the history of the United Nations. The General Assembly at its forty-eighth session took a first and very important step by adopting the mandate for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, a post which had been under discussion for a very long time. I wish to thank Ambassador Ayala Lasso for all the efforts he has undertaken so far in fulfilling his very difficult task and to assure him of our full support. However, more and determined action by the General Assembly is needed, including the allocation of an increased percentage of the overall budget of the United Nations to the Centre for Human Rights in order to enable it to carry out its tasks even more efficiently.

The United Nations is approaching its fiftieth anniversary and preparing to commemorate that event in a dignified manner. I should like to thank Under-Secretary-General Gillian Sorensen for her untiring efforts with regard to the commemorative activities of the Organization. The jubilee is also a good opportunity to bring the purposes and the work of the United Nations closer to the individuals, the people, who are the central subject of the Organization's endeavours. Liechtenstein wishes to contribute to achieving this goal and has therefore scheduled several activities, information on which will be provided in due course. I should like, however, to avail myself of this opportunity to refer briefly to a project which is of particular importance to us and, we believe, of direct relevance for the United Nations.

In one of Liechtenstein's first contributions to these general debates after becoming a Member of the United Nations, His Serene Highness Prince Hans Adam II, Ruling Prince and Head of State of Liechtenstein, introduced at the forty-sixth session of the Assembly an initiative on certain aspects of self-determination, and he elaborated on it at later sessions, including the forty-eighth. Self-determination has been of very great importance in the history of the United Nations and is, of course, enshrined as a principle in its Charter. As representatives of Liechtenstein have outlined on several occasions, our initiative seeks to open up for discussion by the international community certain aspects of the right of self-determination and to encourage a more flexible and practical implementation of that right.

Last year, at the request of the delegation of Liechtenstein, a new sub-item was included in the agenda of the General Assembly, entitled "Effective realization of the right to self-determination through autonomy". We had a very interesting debate in the Third Committee, at the close of which Member States, while agreeing to consider the matter further at a later stage, preferred not to do so during this present, forty-ninth, session of the General Assembly. Reactions and comments made during and surrounding the debate by a large number of countries, as well as developments on the international scene, have confirmed our view that this initiative is timely and potentially valuable for the international community. We will therefore be pursuing it as constructively as possible.

It seems to us that at this stage it would be most appropriate, and most likely to lead to fruitful results, for this subject to be developed further within an academic, rather than a political, framework. His Serene Highness Prince Hans Adam II has therefore, as one element of Liechtenstein's contribution to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary, given a grant to Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs to establish a research programme on self-determination to be conducted under the auspices of the Woodrow Wilson School's Center of International Studies. Two conferences are to be organized in March and June 1995 within the framework of this research programme. They will be open for participation to all Member States of the United Nations, and I wish to extend an invitation to all States to continue working together with us to make further progress on this crucially important question.

International law is the best guarantee of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as of international peace and security. In the case of Liechtenstein, it is also the only guarantee. I therefore wish to reaffirm our commitment to cooperate with all States in further strengthening international law in order to achieve a secure, a peaceful and a prosperous future for the generations to come.

The President: I now call upon the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta and former President of the General Assembly, His Excellency the Honourable Professor Guido de Marco.

Mr. de Marco (Malta): I should like to join others in congratulating the President on his election to preside over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. The wealth of his political and professional experience and his personal qualities will undoubtedly benefit the work of the Assembly in the coming months.

He takes over his new responsibilities from His Excellency Mr. Insanally who, as President during the forty-eighth session, continued to give the presidency that forward-looking spirit which is so important as the United Nations system and, at its very centre, the General Assembly increasingly become the effective focal point of international life.

Five years after the end of the Cold War, the international community continues to witness painful situations of political, economic and social strife.

Daily the media bombard us with images of misery: victims of wars fleeing combat zones, abandoning all they had worked for and accumulated in a life-time; refugees crossing deserts or oceans in superhuman efforts to distance themselves from situations where human dignity is trampled upon, where the essence of human rights has long been lost; the poor and the needy nurturing hopes of escaping from communities where development is absent or denied.

The list of anguish is endless. Most of us are disturbed and angered at the apparent impotence of the international community to attack the root causes of such misery.

We tend to link many of these situations to the end of the Cold War and its aftermath, aware that the transition in international power relations has had an effect which goes far beyond its immediate political impact. It has influenced in different ways the economic and social dynamic not only of those States undergoing the process of transition, but even others - a spill-over effect which is as difficult to contain as it is difficult to identify and map out.

We have entered a historical phase marked and chequered by regional conflicts - wars which sow death and destruction and erase social and economic achievements in a matter of weeks if not days.

There is the temptation to develop an immunity to the tragic consequences of these ills by giving up on our collective responsibility to alleviate suffering. Every time the international community gives in to this temptation it is rudely awakened by degenerating situations which we cannot but find shocking.

Antagonisms with roots which go back in time have exploded into situations of conflict and civil strife, exposing a heritage of ethnic, religious and tribal animosities. Massacres on an unprecedented scale have devastated our collective conscience.

The transition has created a vacuum. In attempting to fill this vacuum, the new and frail forces of democratic political leadership often have to encounter antagonistic economic, political and social forces interested in carving a niche for themselves through the perpetuation of instability. Illegal drug and arms traffickers, money launderers and unscrupulous economic operators stand to profit from an unregulated fiscal, political and social environment. They often join forces in efforts to undermine the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law. The international community has long realized that such ills cannot be tackled in isolation. Cooperation has been strengthened in areas where borders fail to stop the spread of criminality.

The ills of the present age also require enhanced bilateral and regional cooperation. Regions may learn lessons from each other as different illicit trade routes ranging from drugs to plutonium, appear to spread their tentacles to encompass the globe. The heart of the matter lies, however, in rehabilitating those social environments which the illicit trade invades, thrives upon and exploits.

Safeguarding the dignity of every human being, through the full respect for the right to life, liberty and security of person must remain the basis of our collective action.

We all declare ourselves committed to the principles enshrined 46 years ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This commitment, however, has oft fallen victim to that pragmatic approach which demands looking the other way - a philosophy that justifies living with the lesser evil, supposedly to avoid the greater evil. The fallacy of this approach has been seen in many and varied instances, ranging from corruption within the body politic, to totalitarianism at the national level, to trans-boundary crime and terrorism at the international level.

For five years we have been speaking of the creation of a new international order. The words and setting were praiseworthy, as was the commitment to do good. In our euphoria, we assumed that our desire for a new world community where law, order and development should prevail was universally shared.

Crude realities have proved that in making this assumption we failed to note that our desire for good could be matched, indeed challenged, by the evil intentions of others. It was thought that this challenge could come only from existing regimes which we rightfully tried to treat as outcasts - little realizing that the roots of the issue were more widespread and lay in the lack of balance and harmonious development of economic and socio-political systems.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round this year and the setting up of the World Trade Organization could provide us with a channel where trade practices become more transparent and fair. Trade is the driving force behind economic growth and social stability. Lack of viable economic activity erodes the basis of democratic societies, rendering them fragile and subject to instability. One cannot but praise the efforts of the peoples and Governments of many States in striving to build stable economic infrastructures. Their enterprise cannot be achieved without the constant support of developed States with long-established free-market economies.

A new approach requires that we gird ourselves properly to face the challenges ahead. On the national level, political and socio-economic structures must ensure dignity for one and all.

On 21 September, Malta celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of its independence. During these three decades, many were the challenges faced and the lessons learnt. Democracy based on the dignity of each citizen is a task that requires an ever-renewing commitment by all social forces to the right to freedom of opinion.

Pluralism is an essential catalyst in the democratic process and requires that we honour its full meaning in the different areas where it manifests itself. However much this impetus is strengthened when fired by Governments, it is handicapped each time an authoritarian Government assumes that it can rule by diktat. During the past seven years my Government has committed itself to strengthening pluralism in such vital areas as broadcasting, education and trade. Pluralism is a vote of confidence in the people, and a democratically elected Government cannot but reciprocate the trust bestowed by the electorate.

The consolidation of democracy was not the only challenge we had to face. During these 30 years we radically transformed an economy entirely dependent on the presence of foreign military bases into one benefiting

from thriving financial, industrial and tourism sectors. This transition has given Malta the economic buoyancy required of it as a prospective member of the European Union. We note with satisfaction the decision, taken last June at the Corfu Summit, that Malta will be included in the next phase of the enlargement of the European Union.

This state of economic well-being has enabled the Government to consolidate a social policy inspired by the concept of solidarity. Over three decades we have introduced schemes ensuring equal access for men and women by providing appropriate formal educational and social structures.

In enacting this policy, the Government has not ignored its responsibility to ensure a dignified life for all through programmes that range from free medical aid for all citizens to care of the elderly and integration of the handicapped.

Today, Malta can rightfully claim to be a nation at peace with itself and with others. Though conscious of our limitations, we have never let size inhibit our mature involvement in the international arena. On the occasion of the recent signing of the Agreement on the implementation of part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, many representatives acknowledged Malta's role in launching the concept of common heritage - a concept that today is the guiding principle in a number of conventions. Malta stands committed to the creation of a global society based on the principles of dignity and solidarity.

Throughout the centuries, Malta has had its existence marked by the contradiction between its size and its strategic importance. This has necessitated an understanding of the importance of regional stability through cooperation. Since independence, we have cultivated an awareness of the importance of stability in the Mediterranean. The progress registered in the Middle East peace process following the signing of the Declaration of Principles and the Washington Accords of 13 September 1993 makes it easier to understand the importance of the interdependence of European security and Mediterranean security.

Malta has been the first in international forums - and has sometimes been alone - to advocate the need for a Mediterranean dialogue, and it has been consistent in advancing proposals to this end. Over the years since the Helsinki Summit Declaration we have promoted the link between security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean.

Today, the Mediterranean dimension is high on the international agenda. From both sides of this sea of destiny the need for a Mediterranean forum has been underlined - not for the sake of creating another international body but as an aspect of the logic of existence in the light of the many problems in the region. These problems range from unemployment to overpopulation, terrorism and ethnic strife - all in a narrow highway that affects stability in the region and beyond, thus threatening the future of millions.

We cannot, therefore, but identify ourselves with Foreign Minister Alain Juppé, who, in his address to this Assembly at its 8th plenary meeting, stated that France would like to see Europe organizing a forum for cooperation involving all the Mediterranean States, and would be making this one of the main goals of the forthcoming French presidency of the European Union. We also welcome the statement made at the 6th plenary meeting by the President of the Council of Ministers of the European Union - Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel - that Europe attaches great importance to security in the Mediterranean.

Principled cooperation reflects a fundamental and essential Maltese social reality. It was through the extension of this matured concept to the broader European and international level that, within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), Malta launched the initiative for the Conference to declare itself a regional arrangement for the maintenance of peace and security in the terms of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter - a - declaration adopted by CSCE Heads of State and Government at the Helsinki II Summit.

In calling for a new approach at the regional level, we cannot but renew our support for, and our commitment to, the CSCE process. The CSCE was the first body to give tangible form to the connection between the political, economic and human dimensions. The CSCE need not be copied in its detail by other regions, but it provides a model of confidence-building to which other regions can aspire.

The need for a new approach has long been felt at the United Nations. Initiatives taken by Malta when it occupied the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, four years ago, are slowly bearing

fruit. However, it is only legitimate to ask whether the results are proportionate to the efforts made. My Government welcomes as a step in the right direction the recently adopted resolution on revitalization of the General Assembly. Important as it is, this step cannot but lead to others meant to enhance the role of this forum.

We have to maintain the central role of the General Assembly in the framework of the United Nations. This is the only forum where all members are permanent members. We believe that the General Assembly has to develop and define the fact-finding mechanism that pertains to it. We also have to ensure what former Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar referred to as "a balanced constitutional relationship". The maintenance of this relationship with and between the principal organs of the Organization, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat, is important not as an issue of the internal working of the Organization but because "it bears on the guardianship of peace exercised by the United Nations ".

In his report "An Agenda for Peace", Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali underlines the relevance of the General Assembly as a universal forum by calling for recognition of its capacity to consider and recommend appropriate action in the maintenance of international peace and security. He says:

> "To that end it is essential to promote its utilization by all Member States so as to bring greater influence to bear in pre-empting or containing situations which are likely to threaten peace and security." *(A/47/277, para. 36)*

In this respect, the reforms related to the restructuring of the Security Council, which we hope will be negotiated by next year, have a bearing because of the qualitative change they would generate. My Government is studying the proposals already submitted, including the Italian proposal presented yesterday by Foreign Minister Martino.

Next year we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations system. The international community is becoming more aware of the vast extent of common concerns which bond our fate as a global community. A number of international conventions today make specific reference to the common heritage of mankind.

The universal acceptance of this principle is to our collective credit. It is proof of the sense of responsibility and equity that inspires Member States in their obligations towards present and future generations. Only an underlying solidarity can ensure the survival of the planet. This sense of inter-generation solidarity truly dignifies humanity.

Malta has underlined the need for a unit to coordinate and monitor areas related to the common heritage. A convergence of all efforts becomes instrumental to the efficiency with which such initiatives, born of conventions, may work and bear fruit.

A scenario marked by institutional fragmentation can be avoided only by establishing institutional oversight in the interest of the areas we hold in trust for future generations. Rather than reinventing the wheel, we are proposing a transition and evolution in the role of Trusteeship Council, for we are convinced that the Trusteeship Council could be such a point of convergence.

We have taken note of the part of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization which deals with the Trusteeship Council and, in particular, the recommendation that the General Assembly proceed with steps to eliminate that organ in accordance with Article 108 of the Charter. We agree with the Secretary-General that with the end of the Trusteeship Agreement on Palau the Council, as conceived, has concluded its task.

The concept of trust - a concept of English Common Law which is fundamental in its fiduciary nature - is one that reflects the mission of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in so far as certain Territories were concerned. We have to apply the concept of trust to new realities. We believe that the United Nations holds in trust for humanity its common heritage and its common concerns: the environment; the resources of the sea and of the seabed; the climate; the rights of future generations; and the safeguarding of the rights of peoples in situations of complete breakdown of the organs of the State. We believe that we hold these in trust for humanity, and an enhanced and redefined Trusteeship Council can be the right organ for this purpose.

The challenges of the present times demand that we look at the United Nations system with innovative eyes. We cannot aspire to a new world order and yet persist in viewing the institutional mechanisms of the United Nations through the same cold-war lenses, which are ill focused for our times and now shattered by the course of history. We need to view the United Nations as a

complex adaptive system, a system which, without renouncing its original ideals and basic principles, responds adequately and promptly to contemporary needs, a proactive United Nations rather than a reactive one, a United Nations which moulds a new mentality apart from ironing creases and mending tears in the fabric of international relations.

The challenge today is not a physical dividing wall. This generation can one day look back with pride at what it has achieved. The recent ceremonies marking the departure of foreign troops stationed in Germany is a reminder of how significantly different political realities are today from the days when the Berlin Wall cut across a city, a nation and a continent with the same callousness with which it cut across the soul and spirit of Europe.

Equally breathtaking was the transition from a South Africa built on the bastion of apartheid to a democratic South Africa which cherishes the dignity of all of its citizens.

The walls of division are also being dismantled in the Middle East, where political determination and goodwill can and should ensure the full enjoyment of sovereignty and political rights for all peoples living in the region.

However, there are many other situations at which we shall some day look back in anger. The challenge to our political will today is the tragedy of the children in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the rotting, butchered bodies floating in the rivers of Rwanda, the millions of refugees with their lives wasted in never-ending waiting, the other millions of depressed and oppressed living an existence without dignity.

1995 is a year of challenge. It is the year of the World Summit for Social Development and of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the next two links in the triad begun with the recent International Conference on Population and Development at Cairo. Three Conferences which, with Habitat II, require a global approach focused on development rather than on the promotion of hidden agendas which are irrelevant in the resolution of essential issues - essential issues which represent a billion people living in abject poverty, half of whom go to bed hungry every day.

There is a poverty curtain which continues to create a great divide and which becomes more impenetrable when we wilfully shut our eyes to the concept of solidarity. Empowerment becomes a mere cliché if it fails to ensure a life in dignity for this ocean of humanity denied of its most basic right to life, liberty and security of person.

In issuing declarations we do well to underline our commitment to eradicating the root causes that generate so much misery, anguish and pain. We do even better when we make firm commitments on assistance to States which require our solidarity, States in need that require us to match our words with deeds.

Solidarity means reaching out rather than holding out. Solidarity is the building block of greater security to ensure the livelihood and dignity of millions. Solidarity is a key factor in the promotion of development in the lives and minds of men, and hence in the complex relations that guide the international community.

Our legacy to future generations would be a poor one if development and solidarity were not matched by compliance with international standards of human rights. The importance of the rule of law and democracy requires that the international community safeguard human rights. Denial of liberty is the refusal of that oxygen that enables a developed community to live in harmony with itself and others. The challenge of the twenty-first century is not liberty in the abstract: it is the responsibility of the United Nations to be an instrument in forging principles into concrete action.

A second-generation United Nations facing the challenge of solidarity must serve as a guidepost to humanity in its long walk towards peace in freedom.

Mr. Jayakumar (Singapore): First, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate the President on his unanimous election. Like other colleagues who have preceded me, I am confident that he will guide us through this session effectively. Allow me also to place on record our appreciation for his predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, who presided over a very hectic and productive session.

The end of the cold war has not led us to the end of conflicts. Instead, it has given rise to many internecine, intra-State ethnic and religious conflicts, bringing destruction, chaos and suffering in their wake. With the major Powers preoccupied with their domestic economic, political, social and other problems, the world has had no choice but to turn to the United Nations for help. Firstly, there is no alternative. Secondly, there is the expectation that, freed of the past super-Power rivalry that had immobilized the United Nations, the United

Nations will now be able to fulfil the aims of its founding fathers to create a better world.

In the last few years, with these demands for United Nations action increasing manifold, the United Nations has had to grapple simultaneously with many trouble spots around the world. In its first 42 years of existence until 1988, the United Nations launched only 13 peace-keeping operations. But in the short space of the last six to seven years, it has seen 21 peace-keeping operations. Peace-keeping expenditures have also risen dramatically from the 1986 figure of about $350 million to $3.4 billion projected for 1994.

International relations have for a long time been conducted in an inter-State system, with the overriding principle being respect of the sovereignty of independent nations. The main focus of the United Nations Charter was and is on how the international community can respond to threats to peace and security issues between nation-States, as opposed to crises within a State. The world community and the United Nations in particular have relatively little experience to draw upon in managing intra-State conflicts and intra-State peace-keeping. The dilemmas faced by the Security Council in dealing with Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Rwanda, just to name a few, demonstrate that the United Nations is still evolving its approach on how to respond to these challenges.

These new challenges of dealing with intra-State conflicts, it would appear, will continue to be with us. The 1994 United Nations Development Programme report on the Human Development Index indicates that 79 of the 82 global military conflicts since 1991 were intra-State in nature. Can the United Nations, which represents the world's conscience, avoid getting involved in such conflicts? On the one hand, the United Nations is criticized for not intervening in Rwanda in the earlier stages of the civil war. It is argued that if it had, we could have avoided the immense humanitarian disaster we now see in that country. On the other hand, others maintain that the United Nations is not ready to shoulder the implied responsibility, after getting involved in intra-State conflicts, of nursing a country back to the political stability and economic health which is, of course, necessary to prevent a repetition of famine, chaos and other troubles.

Member States are coming round to recognizing that there are political, financial and institutional limitations to the United Nations. We cannot realistically expect the United Nations to resolve all forms of civil wars within national boundaries. For now, we have reverted to the more onerous but perhaps sensible approach of responding to situations on a case by case basis. Inevitably, however, the United Nations will need to establish guidelines and criteria, either formal or otherwise, to decide where United Nations involvement will be necessary and when it will be effective.

The Security Council already appears to have taken steps in this direction. In a May 1994 statement, it agreed that the existence of a threat to international peace and security, and of a clear political goal reflected in a precise mandate, are factors which should be considered when establishing new peace-keeping operations. Other factors should include, *inter alia*, whether a cease-fire exists and whether the parties have committed themselves to a peace process intended to reach a political settlement. Significantly, the Security Council also asked that it be informed of the likely availability of resources for the new operations. These are but preliminary guidelines. It will be necessary to build upon, refine and modify them to best meet the evolving peace and security challenges of this new era.

In many cases of intra-State conflicts, it is probably more effective to address the underlying causes of conflict and provide a foundation for socio-economic development. The root causes of many conflicts are socio-economic: the distribution of scarce resources and the lack of development. Hence, we may do better to concentrate on development aid, education, good governance and basic infrastructure-building to lay the building-blocks to create a civil society. Where appropriate, these measures should be accompanied and supplemented by preventive diplomacy. Peace-keeping operations are a palliative, not a substitute for solving the root causes of conflicts.

At a time when the United Nations is called upon to undertake and adapt to new and complex leadership roles in international peace and security, the persistent financial problems faced by our Organization have clearly to be addressed and overcome. The crucial point is that, having decided to launch a peace-keeping operation, Member States cannot allow it to fail, especially owing to lack of resources. The very credibility of our Organization would be questioned if we were to mandate the United Nations to take on new peace-keeping operations, and then watch them falter and fail because Member States are unwilling or unable to provide the requisite resources.

Unfortunately, the Secretary-General had to again warn the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly in July this year of the dire financial situation of the United Nations, especially in peace-keeping. Unless we do something, these warnings will be repeated year after year. With the many multidimensional challenges facing the United Nations in the post-cold-war era, it is difficult to envisage how the United Nations will be able to carry out its functions effectively if it has to live from hand to mouth in this manner. It is time Member States seriously addressed the issue of financial resources and tackled it firmly once and for all.

There is only one solution to the financial crisis of the United Nations: Member States must pay their assessments in full and on time. Without our payments, the United Nations simply cannot function.

Many Member States have failed to honour the legal and binding obligations that require them to pay their assessments in full and on time. Obligatory and legitimate payments are unconditional and incumbent on all Member States. In fact, individual Member States have no reason to withhold or threaten to withhold contributions to the United Nations, as each Member State has the opportunity to present and argue its case for or against any United Nations activity. Each Member State also has the chance to scrutinize the budgetary implications of each decision and consequently to negotiate a consensus with other Member States as is the practice for all budgetary matters.

But this is by now a tired mantra. In order to encourage timely payments, Member States should consider proposals already being discussed in United Nations circles, such as a system of charging interest on late payments, though with due consideration for the difficult situations of the least developed countries. We would also like to suggest that Member States use the symbolic event of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations to clear their arrears and start with a clean slate financially. Member States could undertake a joint commitment to pay up all their outstanding contributions to the United Nations before this symbolic day in 1995.

The Security Council has a particularly critical role in the United Nations. The Charter confers upon it the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. As spelt out in the Charter, the membership dues of a State Member of the United Nations are one of the few and most basic of the obligations of United Nations membership. Now, if a permanent member of the Security Council cannot even meet this basic obligation, how can it meet the heavy and serious responsibility of maintaining international peace and security on behalf of all Member States? We must establish the principle that the permanent members of the Security Council, with their privileged positions, should not be in arrears. They should in fact set an example for the rest of the United Nations membership in meeting their financial obligations. For the same reason, permanent members must continue to bear special responsibilities in the financing of peace-keeping.

I hope Member States will consider our proposals seriously. I believe these proposals can lead to concrete results in improving the financial situation of the United Nations and even lay the basis for the United Nations better to manage the difficult challenges of this new era. Singapore is fully committed to working together with the Secretary-General and Member States to resolve the financial crisis of the United Nations.

It is expected that, with the rising costs for peace-keeping operations, one of the most heated arguments in the years ahead will be the apportionment of peace-keeping expenses among Member States. Singapore will strive, together with other Member States, to work out objective political and economic criteria for improving the scale. It is clear that any ad hoc, arbitrary or voluntary measures in this regard will have little chance of success given the fact that this is a highly sensitive issue. There must be a process of debate and discussion, however protracted it may be, before we can arrive at a consensus on a new scale. Singapore, for its part, is ready to pay more in peace-keeping expenses provided, first, that this is the outcome of an overall reform of the peace-keeping scale and, secondly, that the problem of those who are in arrears is seriously addressed.

We have come a long way since the founding of the United Nations 49 years ago. It is now time for us to rededicate ourselves to the goal of creating a better world, as envisaged by our Charter. What better time than now, on the eve of our fiftieth anniversary, for us to place the United Nations on a sound financial footing and lay the foundation for it to embark on its programmes and activities for the next 50 years?

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark, His Excellency Mr. Niels Helveg Petersen.

Mr. Petersen (Denmark): The unique role of the United Nations is to promote the well-being of people,

the security and development of nations and the protection of our common world. It was built on a resolve to maintain peace and security and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

The United Nations peace-keeping activities are a challenge for all nations. For Denmark, it is a matter of the highest priority. The United Nations can rely on Denmark to respond swiftly and efficiently to the needs of the Organization for troops, civilian police, customs officials and personnel for humanitarian relief operations. We have made organizational arrangements to make this possible, even at very short notice. A recent example is Denmark's decision to contribute civilian personnel to engage in a humanitarian effort and to promote human rights in Haiti.

We favour a combination of peace-keeping operations with humanitarian relief operations. The establishment of the United Nations stand-by forces will enhance the ability to respond quickly to emerging crises. Denmark is ready to participate with further elements and is establishing an international brigade for that purpose.

Peace-keeping has its own special features. They are different from traditional military training. Peace-keepers must consistently act in full accordance with their role and mandate. As has recently been said, patience, persistence and pressure are key elements of peace-keeping missions. Seventy-three nations today contribute troops, military observers or civilian police to the many ongoing operations. The number of troop-contributing nations is increasing. This has placed emphasis on the need for training.

Denmark stands ready to share its vast experience and knowledge in peace-keeping training and requirements. The cooperation between the Baltic States, the Nordic countries and the United Kingdom on a Baltic peace-keeping battalion is a good example of such cooperation. At present, a Lithuanian platoon is serving in the Danish battalion in Croatia.

Keeping the peace worldwide is costly. Funds are limited, as is the number of trained and equipped troops. In the future we must utilize preventive diplomacy. In Macedonia, we have seen the positive effects of the first example of preventive deployment.

Communication between the Security Council and the troopcontributing countries is imperative. Further progress is needed on this, for instance in the form of regular consultations between the members of the Security Council, the troop-contributing States and the Secretariat.

Peace-keeping involves the important question of safety and security for United Nations and associated personnel. Peace-keepers act as a neutral force. They must be ensured the highest possible standard of protection. Attacks cannot be tolerated. We strongly support the efforts of the United Nations to draft a legally binding treaty in this field.

The "Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) led to discussions on a more active role of the United Nations in peacemaking and peace-keeping. It is to be hoped that the "Agenda for Development" (A/49/935) will inspire an equally important discussion on the role of the United Nations in development. Development policies must correspond to prevailing social, economic, environmental, religious and ethnic problems.

We cannot fight tomorrow's battles with yesterday's weapons.

My Government is proud to host the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in March 1995. The challenge of the Summit, the first of its kind, is to create new foundations of peace through development. It presents a unique chance to overcome the North-South divide through new approaches. We must eradicate poverty and enable all people to earn a livelihood. We must promote social integration by fostering just, safe and stable societies with the full participation of all people. Discrimination in all its forms must be eliminated and human rights respected, and conditions for children and young people must be improved.

As a link to the Beijing Conference on Women, the Summit must make a strong commitment to achieving full equality between men and women and to enhancing the contribution of women to social progress and development.

Progress has been achieved in the preparatory process for the Summit, but this process is still marked by difficulties. Time for preparation is running short. The Secretary-General is making untiring efforts to promote the Copenhagen Summit and to secure its success. It is essential that Member States support the Secretary-General in his endeavours in order to keep up the momentum of the process. The Summit represents an

opportunity for world leaders to commit themselves and their Governments to a better and more just world.

Members may rest assured that, as hosts of the Summit, we will spare no effort to make it a success. We are very much looking forward to welcoming Heads of State or Government in Copenhagen.

The World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 was a turning-point in United Nations activities for the promotion and protection of human rights. It is gratifying to see one of its central recommendations implemented in the form of the establishment of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights. Steps should now be taken to increase substantially the resources for the United Nations human rights programme. We must enable the High Commissioner to discharge his mandate in full.

Human rights are a vital element in preventing and resolving conflicts. We must therefore develop new approaches to monitoring human rights. One such step could be to set up a team of human rights monitors to assist the High Commissioner.

Freedom of expression is a basic human right. The fatwa against Salman Rushdie and others constitutes a flagrant violation of this right. We urge the Iranian Government to dissociate itself from this threat.

Increasingly we realize that our actions or our negligence as individual nations affect other nations and their populations. All nations have a common future that we must protect from nuclear disasters, environmental degradation and weapons of mass destruction.

Chernobyl taught us how important this aspect of security is. It is of great concern to my Government that many nuclear facilities in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States are operating at critically low levels of safety. We must improve this situation.

The Rio de Janeiro Conference in 1992 put renewed emphasis on environment and development. Denmark's resolve to abide by the Rio principles is strong. Our international development assistance of 1 per cent of gross national product (GNP) is guided by the principles of sustainable development. This will provide additional financial resources to developing countries and countries in transition in order to assist them in meeting objectives of sustainability.

Our common future also calls for taking steps towards disarmament, arms control and confidence-building measures. It implies reducing weapons of mass destruction, chemical and biological weapons as well as weapons to be used in outer space. We have reached a time that is conducive to these aims and to allowing the role of the United Nations to be enhanced.

Reform of the United Nations is necessary. Denmark supports a strong Security Council. We agree that the Council needs to be adapted to today's world and that it needs to be enlarged. In enlarging the Council, priority should be given to additional seats for non-permanent members, allocated under the principle of equitable geographical distribution. A small number of new seats could be allocated as permanent seats.

We entrust the United Nations with mandates to secure worldwide peace, security and development, but we fail to ensure the Organization the necessary financial means. It is not tenable, for instance, that troop-contributing nations cannot be reimbursed, and I simply fail to understand how some Member States can advocate United Nations actions, including peace-keeping operations, and then refuse to pay the bill.

Denmark welcomes the withdrawal of the last troops of the former Soviet Union from Estonia and Latvia on 31 August, in accordance with concluded agreements. This is truly a historic event. It is of significance to future relations between the Baltic States and Russia, to stability in the Baltic area and for European security. The agreements must now be fully implemented by all parties in order to keep up the momentum.

As for the former Yugoslavia, important results have been reached since the establishment of the Contact Group. The decision by the authorities of the former Republic of Yugoslavia to close the Serbian-Bosnian border and to accept international surveillance is a direct consequence of pressure by the international community.

The continued negative reaction to the peace plan of the Bosnian Serbs must lead to their further isolation. Sanctions remain one of the most efficient instruments in our policy of isolation. We therefore welcome the adoption of resolution 942 (1994) by the Security Council last week.

Against that background, we welcome the deferral of the question of lifting the arms embargo. Denmark firmly believes that the arms embargo should not be

lifted, as this would entail risks of the conflict's spreading. It would disrupt the peace negotiations, which combine the efforts of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia, and it would make the continued presence of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) impossible.

UNPROFOR is playing an indispensable role in attempting to keep the peace and at the same time alleviate the plight of the people. With 1,400 troops, civilian police and monitors in the former Yugoslavia, Denmark is one of the largest troop contributors to UNPROFOR. We remain committed to our participation in this operation.

We believe that a strict and effective sealing off of the border between Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina will be a new and decisive element. At short notice Denmark sent observers for the Mission of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) to monitor that border.

Denmark continues to make substantial contributions to the humanitarian relief work in the former Yugoslavia. Coordination by the United Nations and the European Union is progressing favourably. Denmark is placing both personnel and financial means at the disposal of that enterprise.

We strongly condemn the renewed "ethnic cleansings" which the Serbs have systematically carried out. The persons responsible for these atrocities must be brought before the international tribunal set up for the punishment of crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia.

In the Middle East political will and hard negotiations have created a historic breakthrough. Denmark warmly welcomes the signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1993 and the Declaration signed between Israel and Jordan in 1994. The Gaza-Jericho Agreement was the next important step. International support is now needed to keep up the momentum.

The holding of fair and free elections in Gaza and the West Bank will represent significant progress. We encourage the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government to ensure speedy implementation of the election process.

Progress should also be achieved in the negotiations between Syria and Israel and between Lebanon and Israel. We welcome the clear political will of all parties to continue their efforts to bring about such progress. They all stand to gain significantly from peace, and the United Nations continues to have an important role to play.

The tragic events in Rwanda revealed the weakness of the United Nations and of the international community. It was demonstrated that we were not able to provide an effective and timely response. The challenge remains to create stability and ensure Rwanda the proper conditions for development. This will require an international effort on a considerable scale, which can be successful only if it is firmly rooted in Rwanda and the countries of the region.

On the African scene it is heartening to see the Republic of South Africa reinstated in its seat in the Assembly. It is now fully participating in the work of the United Nations. South Africa has proved to the world that a peaceful transition from repression to democracy is possible. It has set an example. This also confirms that the United Nations has a role to play in bringing about fundamental reforms in a repressive society.

Denmark has been a staunch supporter of the forces of democratic change in South Africa. We will continue our considerable financial support to the consolidation of democracy.

The best contribution of Member States to the United Nations is to reconfirm their will to implement the Charter, to accelerate the reform process and, indeed, to pay their dues. The United Nations is, and must continue to be, a vital instrument in the service of the peoples of the world.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, Her Excellency Mrs. Gladys Marithza Ruiz Sánchez de Vielmán.

Mrs. Ruiz Sánchez de Vielmán (Guatemala) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth regular session and to offer you the fullest cooperation of the Guatemalan delegation in the important tasks before you. I also wish to express deserved appreciation to Ambassador Samuel Insanally for the manner in which he discharged his duties as President during the last session. The Latin American and Caribbean region is justifiably proud of his performance.

I wish also to convey our appreciation to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for his skilful helmsmanship of the activities of the Organization. We again offer him our support in his endeavours.

In the light of the great changes that have taken place in recent years, we come to this Assembly full of hope and expectation. In some regions of the world events make it possible for us to look ahead with optimism to a future of peaceful coexistence between nations. At the same time, in other regions we look with concern on the inflammation of new hotbeds of tension that lead to a weakening of the power of the State as the catalyst among various social sectors. This situation seriously threatens the social fabric and the very norms that make it possible for human beings to live together in peace.

As far as Guatemala is concerned, international relations must be grounded in profound respect for the principles and norms of international law. Peaceful coexistence can be achieved only by means of absolute respect for the sovereignty, independence and legal equality of States.

Multilateralism has been given new impetus in the new international context and constitutes a more intense, more comprehensive contribution to the search for solutions to problems old and new. To the extent that we place our faith in multilateral action and are able to define it properly and efficiently, we will be able to move forward in developing a stable international order that enables us to foster peace and well-being for mankind. Within this international landscape, which has also transformed the concept of global security, we face the challenge of understanding and coping with the new risks looming over mankind.

Guatemala is at a moment of special importance in its history. Still fresh are the historic and unprecedented events in which the people of Guatemala organized and mobilized and demonstrated its profound democratic convictions, making it possible to restore constitutional order, which had broken down, and carrying the former human rights prosecutor to the presidency.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The background of our President Leon Carpio is well known and constitutes the best guarantee of the commitment and determination of the Government of Guatemala to struggle for the full enjoyment of human rights and the search for peace through dialogue and negotiation. The Government has amply demonstrated its political will through concrete actions aimed at resolving a very broad and complex range of problems. It has done so by pursuing an economic, social and cultural policy that takes into account the multicultural nature of our country, including proposals from civilian society, which naturally include those emanating from the indigenous population of Guatemala.

Our commitment to human rights has also been unquestionably strengthened by the important progress made in the peace negotiations with the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) with a view to ending one of the lengthiest armed conflicts in Latin America. Among the elements of progress made in the negotiations, the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights, with international validity and verification, is of particular importance.

In the process of negotiations, the following agreements have been signed this year: the Framework Agreement for the Resumption of the Negotiating Process, signed in Mexico on 10 January 1994, which provides for all agreements to include national and international verification mechanisms and that the United Nations be responsible for the international ones; the Agreement on a Timetable for the Negotiation of a Firm and Lasting Peace; the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights signed in Mexico on 29 March 1994; the Agreement concerning the resettlement of displaced persons, signed in Oslo on 17 July 1994; the Agreement on the Commission of Inquiry, signed in Oslo on 23 June 1994.

All Guatemalans and the international community are fully aware of the firm resolve of the Government to negotiate responsibly and with determination to achieve peace agreements within the agreed timetable. The patience and flexibility of the Government of Guatemala are well known and have made it possible to reach agreement despite many difficulties. The representatives of the countries in the Group of Friends - Mexico, Colombia, Spain, Norway, the United States and Venezuela - can testify to this.

The Framework Agreement and the Timetable establish the parametres for negotiations, limiting both parties to a certain format and time-frame. The moderator convenes meetings in accordance with the Timetable and the parties attend and negotiate in conformity with the established procedures. These are

the agreed rules and no party can capriciously change them, much less try to usurp the function of verifying compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights. Full compliance with that Agreement is to be verified by a machinery requested of the United Nations by both parties. On this basis, the mandate of the mission known as the United Nations Human Rights Verification Mission in Guatemala was established by General Assembly resolution. My country would like to thank the international community, the Group of Friends and the United Nations for their assistance in the quest for peace.

It is clear that fundamental rights and freedoms, political democracy and the right to development are indivisible and interdependent. Those countries like ours that have experienced the tragedy of armed conflict know from experience that there are other, broader connotations to the right to development and that it is not possible to have development and social evolution without peace. At the same time, the full enjoyment of human rights is not possible without development or peace. The international community has been firm and decisive in its political support for democratic processes. We have to believe that it will pursue this course in seeking to strengthen and refine them. Regrettably, however, the processes involved in national reconciliation have not been understood, and support for the processes of development has been insignificant; worse yet, development has been blocked, thus impeding access to sources of finance and to international markets.

If the development model and reconciliation are allowed to fail, democracy will fail too and we shall never achieve secure and lasting peace, because if the population loses faith in the democratic system we shall inevitably return to authoritarianism. The international community has the responsibility to support economic and social development and to foster the processes of reconciliation if it would have all the nations of the world living under democracy. International condemnation and pressure might be effective in fostering democracy, but they are not sufficient in and of themselves to establish it on a solid and lasting footing.

The Government of Guatemala reiterates its policy of wide-ranging cooperation with the United Nations system in the field of human rights. It has also demonstrated to the international community its readiness to negotiate peace agreements within the scheduled timetable. It hopes that, in the face of a refusal by the URNG to return to the negotiating table or to disarm and demobilize itself after its non-binding signature, that party's sources of finance will be closed off to prevent armed action that would be totally unwarranted. The people of Guatemala has shown itself to be a champion of democracy and dedicated to its improvement. We urge the other party to recognize that its integration into legitimacy by means of negotiation is the only feasible course that would allow it to participate in the building of a new Guatemala.

Guatemalans believe that the authority of the State should be based on the mandate of its people, that any Government must act with the consent of the majority of the governed, and that the voice of the people must be heard in the formulation and implementation of government policy. As far as we are concerned, these are vital and fundamental components of democracy. We understand that there may be differences of opinion as to the form of the people's expression of this mandate and its participation in the various political forums of the State. We also believe that no State has the right to impose its political system on any other.

For us, the fundamental characteristics of the system should be the legitimacy of the people's mandate, the authenticity of its consent to be governed and the effectiveness of its participation. Similarly, democracy between States requires strict and meticulous respect for the United Nations Charter.

Guatemala participates with the Central American countries in a process of regional integration that has undergone institutional renewal. We consider integration to be a process deeply rooted in our common history and culture and an instrument of momentous importance for the development of our peoples.

For this reason, together with the other countries of the region, we are pursuing important initiatives such as the Alliance for Sustainable Development, whose principles are based on improving the quality of life of our peoples, respect for and development of the diverse potential and vitality of the Earth in a sustainable manner, the promotion of peace and democracy as basic forms of human coexistence and respect for human rights and the multicultural and multi-ethnic nature of our region.

Furthermore, Guatemala is active in other regional initiatives, such as the forthcoming ecological Summit in Nicaragua and the International Conference on Peace and Development, which will take place in Honduras. Both of these events are part of the region's endeavours to

promote economic and social development in Central America.

In connection with the territorial dispute over Belize, the Government of Guatemala will now be assisted by a council made up of distinguished citizens, whose advice will make it possible to define and give impetus to the procedure for solving this dispute in the framework of the position, well-known to the international community, that is set forth in document A/49/94 of 14 March this year.

The Government of Guatemala reiterates its readiness to continue direct discussions with the Governments of Belize and the United Kingdom, in conformity with the norms established for the peaceful settlement of disputes, in order to arrive at a definitive solution to the territorial dispute that exists between our States, a position that Guatemala has unswervingly and constantly upheld.

Guatemala wishes to reiterate its support for and solidarity with the people of Haiti, reaffirming its commitment to democracy and consequently to the legitimately elected Government. In addition, it urges the international community to seek a lasting solution to the Haitian crisis that would set out not merely to restore democracy but also to meet the basic needs of the population.

My country feels bound to express its wish to see in Cuba a peaceful transition to a democratic and pluralistic regime. At the same time, we wish to express our gratification at the new possibilities for dialogue that have been developed in connection with the situation in that country.

We also wish to mention our satisfaction with the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and between Israel and Jordan. These represent a momentous step forward in the quest for a solution to one of the most complex regional conflicts. Such agreements are unquestionably proof that peaceful coexistence and understanding among States and nations is possible, even in certain parts of the world where walls of hostility and mistrust have been built up over the years. We hail all the peoples of that region and call on them to continue in their efforts to build peace.

Alongside these positive actions, we feel duty-bound to voice our profound concern at the events that have taken place in Rwanda. International cooperation must be generously channelled to that country. It should be regarded as part of an integrated effort to assist its Government in the difficult process of rebuilding the State with a view to ensuring that it is effective in tackling the serious problems still persisting in the country.

We also share the concerns about the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The international community must continue in its efforts to convince the parties to the conflict of the imperative need to find an appropriate solution that will put an end to this irrational conflict. This conflict cannot be allowed to become a permanent situation.

Guatemala is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country, and it views with great satisfaction the international instruments that are being developed with a view to integrating indigenous peoples into development. Consistent with the precepts of our Magna Carta, the Government is pursuing policies designed to recognize, respect and encourage their lifestyles, customs, traditions, social organization, languages and dialects, while also providing protection to indigenous agricultural lands and cooperatives.

With respect to the question of women, I should underscore that the policy of the Government has been to cooperate with other sectors of Guatemalan society in order to pursue measures designed to expand the scope for participation by women in the productive process and in decision-making. Within the structure of the State itself, there is an ever-growing number of women holding high positions, at the same time bearing a share in major responsibilities relating to the building of a prosperous future for our society. At the same time, Government action is designed to strengthen mechanisms designed to protect women, mechanisms which are in conformity with the resolutions adopted by this Organization designed to advance the rights of women.

Turning now to attention given to children, the Government is fostering joint activities with non-governmental organizations in the private sector with a view to combating drug addiction, illiteracy, malnutrition, abandonment and other problems of children.

The World Summit for Social Development offers us an opportunity to tackle development as a priority of the international community and to redress the inequities that are increasingly widening between developed and developing countries. The progress that has been achieved in the course of the work of the Preparatory

Committee must be further pursued, achieving the consensus needed for the adoption of the draft declaration and the programme of action.

The common interests of the developing world must find reflection in the agendas of international forums and agencies. To this end, mutual cooperation is the proper vehicle, and the coordination endeavours of the developing countries among themselves should be stepped up.

Guatemala has acceded to the international instruments designed to eradicate drug trafficking. The present Government attaches priority to combating this scourge. It goes without saying that we need solidarity and international cooperation in order to eradicate it.

The economies of the developing world have had to make great efforts to adapt and open up to world markets, efforts which, in most cases, have had a high social cost. Guatemala takes the view that trading relations among States need to be based on the free exchange of goods and services. We all need trade, and this makes it vital to break down the barriers placed in its way, in accordance with the spirit and principles of the World Trade Organization.

As a consequence of the changes taking place in the international arena, the United Nations has undertaken a process of restructuring in an attempt to respond to the new requirements of international relations. Guatemala believes there is a need to reform the world Organization, and in this respect we support the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council, which would enable it to function in keeping with present requirements. We are also in favour of establishing a better balance between the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat that would allow the Assembly to play a more decisive role as a forum for deliberation, negotiation and decision-making on all global problems.

In this connection, Guatemala believes that the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council holds pride of place in the process of reforming this Organization. During this process structures that emanated from and operated within a world of confrontation should be reformed. The Security Council should be restructured with a view to achieving representation that is proper and equitable and reflects the current international situation.

Guatemala notes with satisfaction the measures taken by the Secretary-General to adapt the Organization to the new international environment and to equip it with the means to fulfil the objectives of the Charter. In this respect, Guatemala has offered to participate in the formation of the stand-by forces.

Peace-keeping operations are multiplying daily. No one can deny that the role played by these forces in dealing with a very large number of conflicts has prevented them from worsening and has allowed latitude for dialogue and negotiation. For this reason, they need to be given the appropriate means for carrying out their activities, which should always be based on the consent of the parties concerned so as to safeguard the sovereignty of States and respect for their domestic jurisdiction. They should act on the basis of clearly defined mandates and well-delineated fields of action.

The promotion of world peace should be one of the central issues addressed by this Organization. In this context, the limitation of arms production continues to be necessary. All the resources used in weapons research and development should be released and used to promote the well-being of our peoples. Nuclear disarmament should also be one of the major objectives on the agenda of the international community in the coming years.

For this reason, and because of our peace-loving tradition, we shall continue to strive to ensure that at the meeting of States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be held in 1995 the Treaty's validity should be extended indefinitely.

The ultimate aim of the contribution of each and every one of our nations to this Organization is the overall development of the human being. All nations wish to see all their citizens enjoying the benefits of comprehensive development. To achieve this there must be cooperation between all the nations of the Earth.

My Government therefore is very pleased to associate itself with the cordial welcome extended by the Organization to South Africa on the occasion of its reintegration into the United Nations, as well as to the new Observers, especially the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, whose humanitarian impact on the world has been of great importance.

This gives full validity to the principle of universality, which should prevail in the United Nations. And this belief prompts us to touch on the question of a country which is capable of making a significant contribution to the search for solutions to the problems

that the nations of the world must face. The entry of the Republic of China, Taiwan, into the United Nations would strengthen the Organization, permitting and encouraging it to deal properly with topics with global implications.

Guatemala reaffirms its firm and resolute determination to meet the commitments and responsibilities it has undertaken in relation to its own people and the international community, in order to assist in building a fairer, more peaceful and developed world.

The President: The next speaker is the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Najibullah Lafraie, and I call on him.

Mr. Lafraie (Afghanistan): It gives me great pleasure to convey on behalf of the Islamic State of Afghanistan our warm felicitations to Mr. Amara Essy on his unanimous election to the high office of President of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. The Afghan delegation assures him of its full cooperation during his term of office.

I cannot fail to express the gratitude of the Afghan delegation for the effective leadership shown by Ambassador Samuel Insanally, the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, in guiding the proceedings of that session.

His Excellency Professor Burhannudin Rabbani, President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, has instructed me to convey to the Assembly a message he has addressed to it. I am privileged to read out that message now:

> "Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government participating in the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly,
>
> "His Excellency the Secretary-General,
>
> "His Excellency the President of the General Assembly,
>
> "I convey my best wishes for the prosperity, welfare and progress of your nations, and wish the United Nations and the current General Assembly session ever more success in furthering the cause of peace and social justice.
>
> "I had desired to personally attend the current General Assembly session and avail myself of the opportunity to meet and extend to you, and through you to your Governments and peoples, the message of the Islamic State and the Afghan nation. However, important State engagements, particularly some ongoing developments concerning the consolidation of the political process in my country, prevented me from doing so. Therefore, I have asked the Chairman of the Afghan delegation to convey this brief message to the General Assembly.
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> "This message raises the cry of a nation which, with its unprecedented sacrifices, has played its historic role for the cause of world peace and stability and for the collapse of the hegemonistic and expansionist system of the former Soviet Union, as well as for the defence of freedom, social justice and democratic values. A nation which suffered more than 1.5 million sacrifices and immeasurable destruction in all spheres of its life has contributed to the ending of the cold war and to a considerable diminution of the threat of nuclear confrontation. It was the ending of global polarization that enabled East and West to attain positive understandings that produced assurances and trust leading to the establishment of extensive cooperation and the recognition of democracy as an accepted value and concept, irrespective of any bloc interest.
>
> "We are mindful of the fact that our friends are equally grieved as a result of the prevailing sufferings imposed upon our innocent nation. We appreciate their readiness to endeavour to find an end to those destructive events.
>
> "I would like to make it known that as far as the Islamic State is concerned, we have proved our sincerity and our dedication to a peaceful settlement of the present problems. To allow the political process to consolidate, I have announced my readiness to transfer power to a responsible and legitimate authority. I have even declared that I would not be a candidate during the transitional period.
>
> "It is the warmonger elements who have taken advantage of our flexibility and conciliatory gestures, including our unilateral cease-fire declarations, to strengthen their political and military positions and please their outside supporters with moves towards the realization of their heinous designs. These are elements whose merciless rocket attacks on innocent civilian targets and the continued

violation of international humanitarian law are matters of everyday life.

"The Afghan nation is astonished to continue to see a lack of adequate enthusiasm on the part of the world community to act effectively towards the realization of the following legitimate aspirations:

"First, an extensive collective endeavour to provide realistic and effective assistance to accelerate the ongoing political process inside the country;

"Secondly, an immediate start of practical assistance for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-torn Afghanistan, as well as mine clearance, to facilitate and speed up the repatriation of Afghan refugees;

"Thirdly, effective international measures to stop foreign interference, particularly in the form of the supply of weapons and ammunition to those who continue to cause immeasurable loss of life and destruction of property.

"Finding a solution to the existing problems of Afghanistan necessitates the taking of realistic and courageous action by the world community, the United Nations and, in particular, the United Nations Security Council.

"We are confident that clear and decisive action in continuation of the support extended to us during our 14 years of struggle would enable the Afghan nation once again to live in peace, equality and brotherhood, free from any form of racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious prejudice. It is in such an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity that Afghanistan could play its positive and effective role in the consolidation of regional peace and stability as a positive element, defending democracy and social justice.

"As history recounts, a disturbed Afghanistan has always been a source of regional instability, just as its stability has had a positive impact on the tranquillity of the region.

"It is expected that those concerned with peace in Afghanistan, especially our fraternal neighbouring countries, will be supportive of the ongoing political process in our homeland.

"The tenets of Islam guide us towards honesty, justice and mutual respect among members of the human community, irrespective of any form of prejudice. Islam calls upon all Islamic nations to serve the cause of the peace and security of mankind.

"The United Nations, as a source of hope for many suffering nations around the world, can play a decisive role in the return of peace to our shattered and war-stricken country.

"We are appreciative of the personal efforts of His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the special mission under the leadership of His Excellency Mahmoud Mestiri. We also value the efforts of His Excellency Mr. Hamid Algabid, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, for his continuous search to put an end to the conflict in Afghanistan. We wish them every success in coordinating their efforts with our national endeavours based upon realistic approaches.

"Let us hope that our future generations will recall the efforts of our friends and those interested in a stable and peaceful Afghanistan as the continuation of our just struggle for the cause of peace.

"Wishing the current session of the General Assembly every success,

"Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani,

"President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan."

Let me begin my own statement by referring to the miseries being inflicted upon our people and country and by letting members of the Assembly know about some recent political developments in Afghanistan.

Since the last session of the General Assembly three main political developments have taken place in our national efforts aimed at further consolidation of the political process and in the international action in favour of peace and stability in Afghanistan:

First, the completion of the first two rounds and the beginning of a third round of peace efforts by the United Nations special mission to Afghanistan;

Secondly, consideration of the situation in our country by the Security Council;

Thirdly, major developments in the political process, highlighted by the convening in August 1994 of a Supreme Islamic Council in Herat and by its significant resolutions.

Following the first round of its visit to Afghanistan the special mission submitted its report (A/49/208) to the Secretary-General. Before making some comments on that report, I wish first to express the gratitude of the Islamic State of Afghanistan to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his personal concern and the attention he continues to pay to Afghanistan. We assure him of our continued cooperation and support. I should also like to reaffirm the commitment of the Islamic State to support the special mission and to cooperate with it to enable it to discharge its mandate successfully.

Here, I should like to draw the attention of the Assembly to some elements in the report that are of particularly importance. Paragraph 13 states that the mission found most of the country - at least two thirds of it - to be at peace. I would also draw attention to the realistic conclusion of the mission in paragraph 31, which states, *inter alia*, that the

> "mission believes that reconstruction assistance should not be seen as separate from but integral to a lasting political solution." *(A/49/208, para. 31)*

Emphasizing the interrelationship between political and economic activities to promote peace, the report says:

> "Political and economic activity are interrelated and interconnected forces, which must be linked in Afghanistan in ways which encourage peace." *(Ibid.)*

We appreciate this positive assessment of the mission.

In the light of the above conclusions of the United Nations mission as well as its recommendations, and based upon the critical need of the Afghan people for outside assistance, we believe the notion of peace first and reconstruction assistance second is no longer justifiable or plausible. The beginning of reconstruction assistance in those parts of the country where peace prevails will certainly encourage and persuade those who are illegally carrying arms to abandon their weapons for shovels and begin rebuilding their agriculture and farms.

Since the beginning of the abortive coup of 1 January in Kabul, the United Nations Security Council has considered the situation in Afghanistan on three separate occasions. This consideration, which was in conformity with the Afghan nation's expectations of the Security Council, was timely and appropriate.

In its Presidential Statement dated 23 March 1994,

> "The Council stress[ed] the importance that it attaches to full compliance with international humanitarian law in all its aspects and recall[ed] that those who violate international humanitarian law bear individual responsibility." *(S/PRST/1994/12)*

That Statement was just, positive and realistic.

Recently, another Security Council Presidential Statement, dated 11 August 1994, was issued in reference to certain developments including the progress report of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and the recommendations therein. This Presidential Statement too contains some positive, important and realistic elements, in particular the fourth paragraph, wherein

> "The Council calls on all States to take the necessary steps to promote peace in Afghanistan, to stop the flow of weapons to the parties, and to put an end to this destructive conflict." *(S/PRST/1994/43)*

The Statement also urges the international community to assist Afghans in rebuilding their shattered country.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan expressed its appreciation to the Council for addressing an important aspect which is the core of the problem. However, we note with astonishment the reluctance on the part of the Council to condemn the aggressors, who continue to inflict inhuman atrocities on innocent civilian populations and continue to violate international humanitarian law.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan once again states that the present crisis in the country is not a civil war but rather an imposed armed conflict fueled from abroad.

The Security Council's good intentions for Afghanistan can be realized only if the Council addresses the actual cause of the fighting. It should not limit itself to the mere issuance of statements, but should consider taking some specific enforcement measures.

In this connection, it would be appropriate to refer to resolution 48/75 H, adopted at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly on 16 December 1993, on measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional weapons. The Assembly, considering the availability of massive quantities of conventional weapons as a contributing factor to armed conflicts around the world and recognizing the excessive quantity of conventional weapons in a number of countries as a source of destabilization of their national and regional security, invited Member States to take appropriate enforcement measures directed at ending the illegal export of these weapons from their territories.

The continued illegal flow of conventional weapons to Afghanistan represents a violation of the provisions of resolution 48/75 H by some of our neighbouring countries. We hope that the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at the current session, requested by that resolution, will suggest effective ways and means of stopping the illegal flow of these weapons and of collecting weapons illegally distributed in the country.

Now I should like to turn to the recent major political development which is a source of hope for bringing an end to the crisis in our country:

At the beginning, it would not be inappropriate to draw the attention of this Assembly to the fact that the current situation in Afghanistan is a legacy of 14 years of protracted war stemming from the invasion unleashed by the former Soviet Union, as well as of a series of interferences in our internal affairs over the last two years. To eliminate the manifestations and effects of such a protracted war, which aimed at erasing all spiritual, historical and cultural values of Afghan society, is not feasible in a short period of time.

Early last month on the initiative of the south and west zone of the country and its leader and general commander, General Mohammad Ismail Khan, a Supreme Islamic Council convened in the ancient city of Herat, with the participation of more than 700 delegates representing different strata of Afghan society, including governors and the main commanders of various provinces, religious scholars, tribal leaders, technocrats, intellectuals and other scholars, as well as 150 representatives of Afghans living abroad. That important gathering was also attended by the representative of the Office of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as by a number of representatives of friendly countries. At the end, the Supreme Islamic Council adopted an eleven-point resolution. Due to the important contribution the realization of the objectives of the said resolution would have in the consolidation of peace and the political process in the country, I should like to take the liberty of shedding light on some of its most important points.

Given the fact that on the basis of Islamic law and internationally accepted principles, the will of a nation is the source of national sovereignty, the Supreme Islamic Council decided:

- To convene a traditional Grand National Assembly - *Loya Jirgah* - by the end of October 1994, in the capital, Kabul, in order to determine the future political leadership of the country; adopt and ratify the future constitution; and settle other important national issues yet pending;

- To reject and condemn any Government created against the will of the nation and under the patronage of outsiders;

- Strongly to condemn foreign interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, calling upon the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations to act resolutely to put an end to that interference on the basis of the provisions of their Charters;

- To reaffirm the fact that Afghanistan is a distinct and indivisible political entity.

The participating members of the Supreme Islamic Council in Herat committed themselves to standing firm against any rejection of this national accord. The full text of the Herat resolutions can be found in the official document of the Security Council (S/1994/943).

It is gratifying to note that based upon those resolutions, a preparatory commission for the Grand Assembly convened on 30 August in Kabul and at its first meeting unanimously elected Mawlawi Mohammad Nabi Muhammadi, the leader of the Herakat-Inqalabi Islami party, as its Chairman.

Given the fact that the resolutions adopted in Herat marked a major new stage in the political evolution of our country, with the emphasis on the broad participation of Afghans, in that national gathering, and taking into consideration the effective role that the special mission of the United Nations could play in the acceleration of the peace process, it would be relevant to say a few words about the need to coordinate and merge these two series of efforts into components of a unified political process.

Guided by its mandate, the United Nations Special Mission should try to find common ground with a view to ensuring a compromise approach that would lead to national *rapprochement* among Afghans. We are fully confident that Ambassador Mestiri will keep this in mind as the core of his mandate. If the Afghans, in keeping with their traditional way of solving problems, come together in a national gathering and adopt resolutions aimed at preserving the national sovereignty and territorial integrity and at realizing the right of the people to decide their own political future without foreign interference and involvement, the United Nations will be left as a neutral party with a complementary role.

As an additional measure, the United Nations Special Mission could support an initiative that would avoid any loopholes and would ensure fairness and impartiality in the proceedings. Otherwise, attempts to create a parallel initiative will only produce further complication and aggravation of the situation and, consequently, disappointment for our nation in the peacemaking efforts of the United Nations.

I should like to make it clear that at no stage in its existence has Afghanistan constituted a source of threat to its neighbours. Nor has it allowed any third country to use it for the advancement of that country's political differences with Afghanistan's neighbours. We shall continue to act in this manner. Today, we yearn for peace more than for anything else, for only in an atmosphere of peace can we strive for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of our war-shattered country and heal the wounds and relieve the pain and suffering resulting from 14 years of war. We sincerely and seriously expect our neighbours to be supportive of our national efforts to these ends.

In principle, the legitimate interests of States should be recognized and respected by their neighbours. However, if the expectation of a State, under the pretext of preserving its interests, violates the supreme interest of another State - namely, its national sovereignty and territorial integrity and the principle that the will of a nation should govern its destiny - this expectation becomes illegitimate.

Not too long ago the world witnessed the former Soviet Union, as it pursued its activities in Afghanistan, crossing the boundary of legitimate interest. As a result, the Afghan nation, without regard for the disparity between the military means of the two sides, stood against one of the world's mightiest military machines. After 10 years of imposed war and direct confrontation with the Red Army, the Afghan nation, with the help of the Almighty and the sacrifice of more than 1.5 million martyrs, proved once again that it would never allow foreign interference or accept dictates - in particular, that it would not permit outsiders to impose their will on Afghans.

There is no longer a foreign army of occupation in Afghanistan, but the legacy of such a presence is still killing our people. Land-mines constitute the most toxic pollution facing mankind. Referred to as the hidden killers, these do not discriminate between adults and children. If there are 100 million of these deadly devices in 60 war-stricken countries throughout the world, at least one fifth of them are in Afghanistan. This cruel threat is a dreadful impediment to the return of the refugees.

We need a great deal of help from the international community if we are to promote and finance land-mine awareness and clearance programmes. We appreciate highly President Clinton's very important proposal, voiced here, concerning the need for international action to clear mines in the war-stricken countries of the world.

No international effort in the war against poverty and in support of sustained growth and development will be effective if account if not taken of the continuing deterioration in the socio-economic situation of the least developed countries, identified as such by the United Nations system. Among these countries are those that experience frequent natural disasters and those ravaged by war.

Specific action to deal with the particular needs and problems of land-locked developing countries - I refer in particular to assistance for the land-locked States of central Asia - is an important matter that requires discussion during this session of the General Assembly. Afghanistan, which is itself land-locked, is the country of transit for many central Asian States. Roads and highways in Afghanistan are damaged as a result of the long years of foreign armed aggression. For this reason we shall propose that the United Nations system assist our region by carrying out a corridor study - a study of the transit roads in Afghanistan, which is situated in the heart of Asia.

Transit and transport agreements between the land-locked States members of the Economic Cooperation Organization, including Afghanistan, and Iran and Pakistan need to be concluded or updated to take account of the new circumstances and the legal and technical

advice of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan stands firm in support of human rights throughout the world but particularly in Afghanistan. Much to our regret, armed conflict between various groups has resulted in violations of human rights - especially of the right to life, which is humanity's most fundamental right. To prevent such occurrences and to ensure security, the State is determined to collect the arms currently in the possession of certain groups. There has already been noticeable progress in this area. Most of the armed groups realize the need to end conflicts and to relinquish heavy armaments. The completion of this task can be ensured through strengthening of the national armed forces and the national police force. Significant steps will be taken towards this goal.

As for civil, political, economic and cultural rights, the Islamic State of Afghanistan, in observance of Islamic teaching and international responsibilities, acknowledges its duty to eliminate all discrimination and intolerance, whether religious, linguistic or based on gender. Afghanistan recognizes its Islamic responsibility to ensure the family, legal, cultural, social, political and economic rights of women. Apart from obligations of principle and morality, a country that lost 15 per cent of its population during the war cannot be completely successful in the enormous task of reconstruction without the active participation of its female population. Therefore, it is imperative that proper measures be taken to secure extensive participation by Afghan women in the process of rebuilding the nation's economy, culture and society.

The President returned to the Chair.

In the midst of these conflicts, it is the children who suffer most. In Afghanistan alone there are almost 1 million war orphans. The situation of this precious and most vulnerable category of the population deserves particular attention. To this end, the Islamic State of Afghanistan will submit a proposal for consideration by the Assembly at its current session to establish an international fund within the framework of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to assist the rehabilitation of orphans of armed conflicts. It would be worth considering a declaration of 1996 as the international year of orphans. We welcome the appointment of Graça Machel by the Secretary-General as an expert to carry out the mandate of the General Assembly to conduct a study of the consequences of armed conflicts on children.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan, inspired by Islamic instructions, has no hesitation in taking a firm stand against terrorism in any shape or form. As we battle violence in our own land, we continue to add our voice to that of the international community in condemning terrorism the world over.

At its last session the General Assembly discussed in some detail the plight of disabled people. However, the practical achievements do not seem to be adequate. From this rostrum I remind the world community again of the state of the nearly 2 million disabled persons in Afghanistan, victims of a war of aggression. We will submit proposals for securing international assistance for the world's disabled population in order to alleviate their social, economic and psychological problems.

One issue worth mentioning, with both regional and international implications, is that of narcotic drugs. The illicit cultivation, production, stocking, smuggling and trafficking of narcotic drugs are undeniably critical problems facing humanity today. Regrettably, one of the legacies of the long war in Afghanistan is the transformation of some parts of our country into staging areas for illicit drug activities. This phenomenon, which is partly the result of the unavailability of alternative productive economic activities, is a source of great concern to us. Afghanistan, despite its scarce resources, has taken serious measures in the struggle against illicit drugs. We will spare no effort to combat these illegal activities. However, we must not overlook the reality that Afghanistan, with its extremely limited means and massive economic and financial needs, is not in a position effectively to accomplish this task alone. Afghanistan needs urgent support from the international community to intensify the struggle against drug cultivation and trafficking.

The ongoing internal conflict in Tajikistan, a fraternal neighbour of Afghanistan, is a matter of continued concern to us. We hope that the brotherly Tajik people, who are opening a new chapter in their history after the collapse of the former Soviet Union and their emergence as a new and independent nation, will soon succeed in overcoming their difficulties.

One dimension of this internal conflict is the periodic disturbances occurring on the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. As a result of the conflict inside Tajikistan, more than 100,000 Tajik refugees have taken refuge inside Afghanistan. The Islamic State of Afghanistan, on the basis of deep feelings of Islamic

brotherhood, humanitarian considerations and traditional Afghan hospitality, provided shelter to those refugees.

The influx of the Tajik refugees to Afghanistan is due to the political circumstances in their own country. Therefore, only a political solution to the problems with which they are faced, with the Government of Tajikistan, will guarantee their voluntary repatriation to their homeland.

The dispatch of armed forces of the Russian Federation to Tajikistan, especially on the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, would in our view further aggravate the problem rather than contribute to its solution.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan has committed itself to supporting the peaceful initiative of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy to Tajikistan, Ambassador Piriz-Ballon. As far as possible we have encouraged the Tajik refugee leaders, in a spirit of conciliation, to help United Nations efforts to succeed by agreeing to a negotiated settlement. A chief factor in resolving the problem will be the Tajik Government's heeding the just and legitimate demands of the Tajik opposition leaders.

Afghanistan, in pursuit of its previous commitments, is desirous that its border with Tajikistan should be a border of peace, understanding and friendship. Once again we would like to declare that periodic clashes on the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan are a manifestation of the internal conflict in Tajikistan, and not a single member of the Afghan armed forces is, or will be, involved in any border clashes.

As everyone knows, in Bosnia and Herzegovina the odious and barbaric "ethnic cleansing" practised by the Serbs of Bosnia re-emerged a few weeks ago in Banja Luka, Bijeljina and other areas. The Security Council has just demanded - in resolution 941 (1994) of 23 September - that the Bosnian Serb authorities immediately cease their campaign of "ethnic cleansing". This demand of the Security Council is bound to be disregarded and denied by the Bosnian Serb criminals. It is therefore imperative that the Security Council should decide to mandate a United Nations presence and coercive measures for the protection of the Bosnian communities threatened by further "ethnic cleansing". Otherwise, the United Nations and the five-Power Contact Group will lose all credibility.

Another dangerous area calls for the immediate attention of the Organization if we want to save the whole region from catastrophe. The grave situation in Kosovo, aggravated by the daily massive repression committed by the Serbian authorities against 2 million ethnic Albanians, and referred to as a time-bomb, remains explosive. We also remind the Assembly of human rights violations in Sandjak.

It is our view that a special United Nations mission should assess war damage resulting from the acts of armed aggression committed by the Bosnian Serbs. The aggressors must know that they will have to pay war reparations to those who are their victims. This will remind aggressors always to think twice before firing and destroying.

On the basis of its common historical ties with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, especially common religious ties with its Muslim population, the Islamic State of Afghanistan is deeply concerned at the exacerbation of the situation in that territory. The sufferings of the Muslim people of Kashmir add to our grief. We continue to believe that the question of Kashmir, which has always been one of the prime concerns of the Muslim Umma, can find a lasting solution through peaceful means in an atmosphere of trust, understanding and good-neighbourliness between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of India, a solution on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and internationally accepted principles on the settlement of disputes.

During these crucial moments of the history of the Palestinian people, we reiterate the responsibility of the international community to support the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians, including their right to return to their homeland, and the right to self-determination, encompassing the right to their own independent State on their national soil, with Al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital. The peace process has to be aimed at the full implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) guaranteeing the full withdrawal of occupying forces from all the occupied Palestinian territories.

The Afghan nation, like other Islamic nations, considers the occupation of the site of one of the most sacred shrines of Islam, in Al-Quds, by authorities lacking awareness of its sacred Islamic character, as contempt for the most basic spiritual rights of the Islamic community all over the world.

In conclusion, I wish to draw the attention of this world gathering to the fact that, as a result of heavy

rocket attacks on Kabul by the opposition, as well as their blocking of the roads to Kabul, the capital has been without running water, electricity or heating for most of the time since last January. Also, a shortage of food supplies seems to be threatening the city's most vulnerable inhabitants who are suffering. It has been predicted that the coming winter will be a harsh one.

As the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) fears, a large-scale human disaster may be impossible to avert. We request the donor community to respond positively and urgently to the United Nations appeal for winter emergency assistance to the city of Kabul.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Benin, His Excellency Mr. Robert Dossou.

Mr. Dossou (Benin) *(interpretation from French):* I should like first of all, Mr. President, to tell you how pleased the Benin delegation is to see you presiding over this session of the General Assembly. This is an honour for all of Africa, and especially your country, with which Benin has age-old ties of friendship and, still more, of fraternity.

At a time when, more than ever before, the United Nations is called upon to act in the interests of peace and the well-being of mankind, this election is acknowledgement by the international community not only of the dedication of Côte d'Ivoire to the cause of peace and prosperity but also of your personal qualities as a seasoned diplomat.

Benin is proud to see a distinguished representative of a country from the subregion of West Africa assume this important responsibility, and can assure you, Sir, of the cooperation and support of its delegation - and here we wish also to congratulate the other members of the General Committee.

I would be remiss if I did not align myself, with great emotion and pleasure, with what His Excellency Mr. Konan Bédié, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire said, that in your election we can already see that Africa is resisting marginalization.

I should also like to pay tribute to your eminent predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who assumed with such great competence and skill the presidency of our Assembly at its forty-eighth session. He has left an indelible mark on this world Organization through his personal contribution to our efforts at revitalizing the General Assembly, restructuring the Security Council and resuming development.

On behalf of the people and the Government of Benin, I should like to pay a most deserved tribute to the United Nations and its Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the intensive activities they have been carrying out for peace and development for all peoples, especially at this time when armed conflict, ethnic clashes and tribal warfare distort the basic values of mankind.

I should also like to welcome the granting to the Sovereign Military Order of Malta of Observer status at the United Nations.

Since our last session, positive developments have taken place in the settlement of internal, local and regional conflicts that have caused upheavals in the international arena. I would mention, among others, the emergence of a new South Africa, one that is united, democratic and non-racial, where each person can at last enjoy full citizenship.

Benin hails once again the courage and determination of the South African people - courage and determination that have enabled all humanity to win this historic victory, one of dialogue over confrontation and of peace over violence.

Our Organization, which is proud of its contribution, must see to it the consolidation of the policy of unity and national reconciliation and reconstruction pursued by President Nelson Mandela, whose wisdom and clear-sightedness are equalled only by the historic dimensions of the man himself.

In Mozambique, our most cherished wish is for a continuation of the process of reconciliation currently under way until the final holding in October of free and democratic elections in that country, stricken by so many years of civil war.

Similarly, we express the hope that in Angola the negotiations under way between the Angolan Government and UNITA might lead to an effective cease-fire and to the establishment of a lasting peace, which are absolute prerequisites for reconciliation and national reconstruction.

With regard to the question of Palestine, we welcome the positive and irreversible developments towards a just and lasting settlement since the historic signing, between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel, of the Declaration of Principles on Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and Jericho. In the same context, the Benin delegation would encourage Israel and the Arab States to continue to improve their relations through cooperation and mutual understanding for the establishment of lasting peace in the Middle East.

As regards the situation between Kuwait and Iraq, it is important, in the interest of security and stability in the Gulf, that Iraq confirm clearly, and without ambiguity, its recognition of the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and the international borders of Kuwait by agreeing, among other things, to Security Council resolution 833 (1993).

Other conflicts are now in the process of being settled elsewhere, for example in Cambodia and Central America, where praiseworthy efforts are under way with a view to the gradual and definitive normalization of the political situation.

In spite of these encouraging facts, we regret to note that the persistent activities of forces for fragmentation and disintegration are hindering the achievement of peace in certain parts of the world.

In this context, we should point out, *inter alia*, the very alarming situation in Somalia, where military intransigence and political intolerance are to no avail prolonging human suffering, jeopardizing the lives of the staff of United Nations peace-keeping and peacemaking operations, and provoking some irritation within the international community, whose valuable contribution to a peaceful and lasting settlement is absolutely necessary. It is time for the protagonists, on whom an acceptable solution to their conflicts depends, to show good will and flexibility.

We deplore the fact that in Liberia, in spite of the considerable efforts made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), supported by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and by the United Nations, the implementation of the Cotonou agreement has been carried out only begrudgingly. Six months after taking office on 7 March 1994, the National Transitional Government has not yet managed effectively to extend its authority to the entire country, whereas the disarmament and demobilization process is practically suspended.

Since a return to normalcy in Liberia is absolutely necessary for the continuation of the programme of economic integration of the subregion of West Africa, my country urges the Liberian parties to abide by the Cotonou agreement so as to speed the return of the country to normalcy. Once again Benin encourages the international community to maintain and increase financial assistance so as to enable the ECOWAS Military Observer Group, expanded by troops from Uganda and Tanzania, to fully discharge its mandate.

With regard to Rwanda, ravaged by a war reminiscent of another age, Benin joins in the indignation expressed by the international community by condemning most vigorously the massive and systematic violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law. We welcome the humanitarian activities and good offices of the United Nations, of the OAU, of France, of the United States of America, of the African countries, and particularly those of the subregion, as well as those of non-governmental organizations in coming to the assistance of refugees and helping to initiate a dialogue among Rwandans. The delegation of Benin is convinced that any lasting national reconciliation in Rwanda must be based on the Arusha agreement of 4 August 1993 in order to maximize the opportunities to rebuild the country.

But in order to avoid a repetition of the Rwandan holocaust elsewhere, we should support efforts to identify those guilty of abuses, whoever they may be, so that they might answer for their crimes against humanity.

In neighbouring Burundi, most recently torn by armed clashes, the return to a precarious calm and the agreement for a government that was recently signed by the parties to the conflict bear witness to a new awareness on the part of that fraternal people, the fate of whom had been of great concern to all peace- and freedom-loving men and women throughout the world. We urge them most earnestly to continue along this path so as to consolidate their unity and cohesion.

Furthermore, the international community has followed very closely recent developments in the situation in Haiti. In fact, on the basis of Security Council 940 (1994), the United States Government showed firmness and intelligence by forcing the Port-au-Prince dictators to agree to give up the power they seized three years ago.

Benin exhorts the United Nations, the Organization of American States and the United States of America to

unite their efforts to bring about the effective reinstatement of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the peaceful restoration of democracy in Haiti. The Republic of Benin is prepared, within its modest resources, to make its contribution to the triumph of peace and democracy in Haiti.

In Europe - specifically in Bosnia and Herzegovina - it is to be regretted that the Serbs have rejected the latest peace plan of the Contact Group, which offered them 49 per cent of the Bosnian territory. We will welcome the agreement by the Belgrade authorities to deploy United Nations forces along their country's borders and to enforce the international arms embargo.

Faced with the intransigence of the Bosnian Serbs, the international community should take over the protection and defence of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia, so as to avoid any spread of this interminable conflict, which has already been exacerbated by the hateful practice of "ethnic cleansing".

Following the collapse of ideologies, the role of the United Nations in world affairs is and remains essential. We should avoid any weakening of its ability effectively and efficiently to promote peace, as this would do great harm to its credibility. The revitalization, restructuring and democratization of the United Nations must continue in order to increase its efficiency in carrying out the work it has undertaken.

This, for example, should be the case for the Security Council, which has the responsibility of acting on behalf of Member States for the maintenance of international peace and security. Its legitimacy, its credibility and its effectiveness will be strengthened if we are able to take steps to enlarge it and change the composition of its membership so as to reflect the increase in the number of States Members of this world Organization.

Aware of the fact that, in this new context, the Security Council cannot remain as it was designed and created a half-century ago, the delegation of Benin is in favour of a patient search for consensus on all issues pertaining to its reform.

The production, international transfer and accumulation of arms are a threat to peace and stability the world over. This is why the international community's commitment to peace requires the firm determination to make real progress in the process of general and complete disarmament under international control.

In the area of conflict prevention and crisis management, we must strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations and support the idea of good offices and of preventive diplomacy as advocated by the Secretary-General in the Agenda for Peace.

Respect for the principle of the sovereignty of States could hinder the implementation of this approach. Indeed, crises or conflicts today are for the most part internal in nature - civil wars, territorial partitions, ethnic clashes, religious or tribal struggles, and so forth. But these crises and conflicts can also threaten international peace and security. Hence there is a balance to be struck between intervention and respect for the sovereignty of States.

In this context, we shall continue to encourage close cooperation with regional organizations, pursuant to Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. Within Africa, there is already in place a mechanism for preventing, managing and settling conflicts which makes the development and strengthening of such cooperation possible.

I would also mention, as part of regional contributions to global efforts for peace, the conclusions reached by the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation in the South Atlantic, held in Brasilia on 21 and 22 September 1994.

We can never emphasize enough the close relationship between peace, democracy, human rights and sustainable development. And we should be pleased that our Organization offers a proper framework for the achievement of consensus on this relationship. The Declaration and Programme of Action of the important World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993 prove that the international community is determined to face up to these non-military threats to peace and security the world over.

Economic and social issues are of concern today to the entire world and raise moral issues among politicians, Governments and representatives of civilian society. The end of the cold war, far from ironing out difficulties, has further widened the gap between the developed and the developing countries. The developed and the developing countries must work together and understand one another if there is to be progress and, especially, peace for all.

There are many social and economic problems facing the world, and we must attack these ills at their

very roots. The preparations for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations, and the major conferences it has organized since 1994, provide us with an opportunity to better deal with the major problems that are undermining and marring today's world.

Above and beyond general political declarations, promises unkept and wishes unfulfilled, all the actors in the international community must by common agreement draw up concrete, effective and immediate solutions that will allow us to avoid chaos in the developing countries, in particular in Africa and in the least developed countries. Otherwise, our expectations for the beginning of the twenty-first century will not be met.

None the less, there is room for hope when we remember that the Assembly, in resolution 47/181 of 22 December 1992, asked the Secretary-General to submit to it a report on an agenda for development, after consulting with Member States. The drafting of this agenda, to be adopted during the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, will be a clear declaration of the right to development and a reorientation of the objectives and priorities of the United Nations system towards socio-economic activities and programmes designed first and foremost to eliminate poverty and then to develop human resources through education, training, the creation of productive employment, and social integration.

It is thus possible to change the current situation and to reverse the process of impoverishment, aggravated by economic stagnation. The agenda for development will usefully complement Agenda 21 and the Agenda for Peace in the quest for sustainable development.

Our vision of the twenty-first century and our prospects for the future should be illuminated and strengthened by the effective implementation of the various programmes and plans of action adopted since the beginning of this decade within the framework of the United Nations system. I would like to cite, as examples, the Plan of Action for children, the Programme of Action for the least developed countries in the 1990s, and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). While the implementation of the first two programmes has already begun and we will already be able to take stock of them a mid-term review in 1995, UN-NADAF is still in its infancy. Indeed, there has been no concrete action, no funding for projects and no commitment of financial resources since the adoption of the new programme in December 1991 by the General Assembly.

Furthermore, the planned resumed session to continue and complete negotiations on the draft resolution to create a diversification fund for African commodities has remained wishful thinking - for want, we are told, of a president to lead the debates and to conclude the work - and all this, in spite of the efforts made by the President of last year's General Assembly session.

None the less, we welcome the conclusions and recommendations of the second part of the thirty-fourth session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on a revised, system-wide plan of action for economic recovery and development in Africa.

But we need not limit ourselves to establishing a closer relationship between a system-wide plan and UN-NADAF or to determining the priority sectors to be the focal points of action carried out thanks to the cooperation of United Nations bodies for the remaining period of the plan's implementation. In addition to the present resources, we must mobilize supplementary resources for the effective implementation of the activities and programmes involved.

The economic and social crises that today are causing upheaval in Africa have highlighted the challenges to be taken up by that continent in order to make progress along the path of development. To cope with these crises, most of our countries have undertaken far-reaching political and economic reforms.

In Benin, we are continuing our march forward to make sure that our democratic process - begun almost five years ago - takes root and that our national economy is consolidated. In spite of substantial efforts and sacrifices, our political and economic structures remain fragile and vulnerable.

Furthermore, taking up the challenges of the 1990s in Africa necessarily means finding rapid and lasting solutions to problems linked to foreign indebtedness, seeking an inflow of new financial and other resources to meet the growing development needs, ensuring the transfer of new and appropriate technology; and promoting a truly open and equitable system of international trade, as well as encouraging the diversification and modernization of African economies.

As regards external debt, the developed countries will have to exert clear and resolute political determination by pursuing a policy of cancelling outright the official debt of the African and least developed countries; by deciding, in the managing boards of the multilateral financial institutions, to reduce by 50 per cent the multilateral debt of the developing countries, particularly of the African and least developed countries; and by negotiating with the banking institutions a rescheduling of commercial debt. We remain convinced that these initiatives are within the scope of the Governments of the developed countries and can be implemented in a demonstration that the world is changing.

With regard to international trade, the mixed results for Africa of the negotiations of the Uruguay Round give us little hope that, within the framework of international trade, our countries will soon emerge from the marginalization in which they have existed since the late 1980s. As in all previous rounds of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the Uruguay Round led to the elimination of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers. But the common estimates of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development show that the overall result of this eighth round of negotiations will only benefit the industrial countries. For Africa, for example, the OECD studies predict losses of over $2 billion by the year 2002, not to mention the fact that the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific that are linked to the European Union by the Lomé Convention risk losing certain advantages they have enjoyed until now.

Furthermore, the results of the negotiations of the Uruguay Round are making the developing countries, particularly those of Africa, dependent on food products imported from developed countries, whereas the objective of the current strategies is to ensure food security in Africa. In such circumstances, Benin earnestly hopes that the first action taken by the World Trade Organization will be to close the loopholes of the negotiated text by making bold decisions and recommendations on behalf of Africa and thereby correcting drawbacks foreseen from the outset.

The decisions and recommendations of the Earth Summit will, as they are implemented, gradually become solid landmarks for current and future generations in the building of a society that, thanks to the achievement of sustainable development, will not run the risk of self-destruction.

In this framework, Benin welcomes the adoption on 6 May 1994 in Barbados of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Benin also welcomes the conclusion in Paris on 17 June of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. We hope that this Convention and the regional Annex for implementation in Africa will serve as a basis for a new contract between Governments, donors and local populations in their efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. This new contract must be reflected in firm and precise commitments of financial resources and the transfer of ecologically sound technology. If it is not, we will find ourselves in the same unfortunate situation that led, because of a lack of sufficient resources and the poor management of those allocated, to the non-implementation of the results of the United Nations Conference on Desertification held in Nairobi in 1977. Benin therefore appeals to all States to attend the signing ceremony for the Convention on 14 and 15 October in Paris.

The curtain has barely dropped on the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, which marks the birth of a new process for population and development strategies. The intensity of debate during the Conference was commensurate with the importance of the issue. In order to meet the challenge of the development to which countries throughout the world aspire, we must set our children and women, who represent the majority of the populations of our countries, along the road to progress, which requires information, education and training.

The work of the preparatory committees for important United Nations conferences being organized at the moment - especially the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the entry into force on 16 November 1994 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, completed last July with the agreement on Part XI - will strengthen the positive trend clearly expressed during earlier negotiations. Nevertheless, the life-giving flame fed by the spirit of Rio de Janeiro might go out if intellectual efforts are not complemented by a mobilization of new and addition financial resources to carry out all the activities planned.

The World Summit for Social Development will bring together for the first time Heads of State or

Government in order to take decisions on social development. Benin believes that the declaration and programme of action to be adopted in Copenhagen in March 1995 should not be limited to acknowledging and accepting the fact that Africa is the continent facing the greatest number of social problems. These two documents should be a reference point that clearly defines concrete measures, an implementation schedule and the estimated costs of activities aimed at eliminating poverty and creating productive employment and social integration.

Benin suggests that the Copenhagen Summit recommend the proclamation of an international decade for the eradication of poverty, which would be the continuation of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty adopted under General Assembly resolution 48/183.

The new international situation calls for strengthening, democratizing and rationalizing the activities of the United Nations, and it is up to us the Member States to make an outstanding contribution in the pursuit of the noble objectives of peace, justice and development. We feel that this is possible if all Member States respect the obligations incumbent upon them under the Charter.

The delegation of Benin is convinced that our current deliberations will be guided by a common determination to take concerted and concrete steps best suited to the necessity of maintaining peace and promoting prosperity throughout the world. In particular, this will require a rejection of indecisiveness and self-absorption.

The President *(interpretation from French):* We have heard the last speaker in the general debate for this meeting.

I now call on the representative of Greece, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Stathatos (Greece): I should like to respond briefly - very briefly indeed - to the statement made yesterday by the Croatian delegation.

First of all, the Greek delegation wishes to express its satisfaction at the recognition by the representative of the Republic of Croatia of the constructive actions of the Greek Government that could help to resolve the crisis in the region in a just and equitable manner.

As to the reference by the Greek Foreign Minister to the "problem of the Krajinas", it is obvious that this had a mere geographical connotation, and could by no means be construed or interpreted as a reference to the various substantial aspects of the problem nor as putting into question the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia.

Greece's position in this respect is in full harmony with that of the European Union as it appears in the memorandum attached to the text of the speech delivered by the President of the Council of the European Union on 27 September 1994. Coincidentally, he also used the term "Krajina", without, however, provoking any similar reaction from the Croatian delegation.

May I add that, since the Republic of Croatia seems to be particularly sensitive to geographic and State names, as well as to the principle of consistency, it is only natural and legitimate to expect it to show the same sensitivity and consistency regarding the names of other States in the region, by abstaining from the practice it has followed thus far and by complying with the relevant and unambiguous provisions of Security Council resolution 817 (1993). Anyway, a reference made in this respect this afternoon in the Security Council by the representative of Croatia is considered by the Greek delegation as a step in the right direction.

The meeting rose at 7.40 p.m.